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NAPOLEON

NAPOLEON I.

NAPOLEON

A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

BY

DR. MAX LENZ

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

FREDERIC WHYTE

WITH 50 ILLUSTRATIONS, INCLUDING PHOTOGRAVURE FRONTISPIECE, ALSO MAPS, AND FACSIMILE OF AUTOGRAPHS

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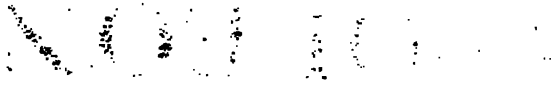

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NAPOLEON

CHAPTER I

CORSICA

"I WAS born when my country was dying"—that is how Napoleon himself, with equal force and brevity, has pointed to the moment in which he came into the world. For on the 9th of May, 1769, Pasquale Paoli, with the Corsican militia, had taken the field against the French for the last time; not long afterwards an English ship conveyed the defeated general to Naples, and that was the end of the freedom of Corsica. It was on the 15th of August in the same year, the feast of the Assumption, that Lætitia Ramolino, the young and beautiful wife of Carlo Buonaparte, gave birth to her illustrious son.

These words were addressed to no less a personage than Paoli himself, then an exile in England. They formed the first line of the first letter that the young Buonaparte ever wrote to the hero of Corsica, whom he regarded as the incarnation of patriotism; he wrote it on the 12th of June, 1789; that is to say, in the hour when France, who had robbed Corsica of her freedom, was herself on the brink of disaster.

The States General, called together by the King, had been assembled at Versailles since May, and on the 10th of June the Abbe Sièyes, the leader of the Third Estate, had called upon its representatives to constitute themselves the government of the country. It seems natural to suppose that it was the news of this event, rightly regarded as the real beginning of the Revolution, that moved the young officer, who in his garrison at Auxonne must have been following the course of affairs at Versailles more keenly than any Frenchman, to the penning of his letter.

There can be no better indication, however, of the whole colouring of Napoleon's mind from early boyhood than this pithy sentence in which the lion's claw, the Emperor's hand, reveals itself. He was not yet twenty years old, and since his tenth year he had been in France and had worn the King's uniform. His whole environment and the atmosphere in which he lived had been French; he wrote and spoke French, he had almost forgotten the Corsican dialect. But all this had not weakened, it had rather served to stimulate and intensify his Corsican instincts. Every word of his that has come down to us from that period of his life points to the one emotion: the desire to win back his country's freedom, together with an inextinguishable hatred against the conqueror. "Thirty thousand Frenchmen," he goes on to say, "vomited out on our coast, flooding the throne of freedom with rivers of blood—that was the hateful scene first given to my eyes. The cries of the dying, the tears of the hopeless, surrounded my cradle from the moment of my birth. You had left our island, and with you had gone our happiness and our hope. Slavery followed upon our

submission : subjected to the threefold tyranny of the mercenary, the magistrate, and the tax collector, our countrymen live on despised—despised by those who have the reins of government in their hands. Is that not the most hideous of all the tortures that a man can be put to ? Did the unfortunate Peruvians meet with a worse fate, when they fell victims to the sword of the covetous Spaniard ?"

How are we to account for this fierce disaffection of the young officer, for his burning hatred against the country to whose army he belonged, to whose King he owed his education and his livelihood ? Is his attitude justified by the measures adopted by the French in Corsica ? Were his countrymen really treated with contempt and placed absolutely at the mercy of the foreign administration ? Were they deprived of their possessions and ground down by taxation ? Nothing of the kind. The French had indeed come as conquerors ; but it must be admitted that once in the position of masters they had done their utmost to win over their new subjects, and in particular the leading families of the island. In the principal court of judicature which they instituted, and to which they gave the same standing as that of the *Parlements* or high courts of France, there were four Corsicans out of a total of twelve members having seats and votes ; in the eleven lower courts the magistrates of Corsican birth outnumbered the French. The villages and valleys of the island were self-governing in all local matters ; the King appointed an overseer to each of its ten provinces, but these officials were chosen from the Corsican nobility. There was a body of representatives of the various orders meeting at Bastia, the seat of the Government,

and consisting of twenty-three deputies taken from the clergy, the nobility, and the commons. There were no fixed dates for its sessions, but in the intervals between them a committee of twelve members of the Second Estate and two delegates specially chosen for the purpose were empowered to represent the whole body in all dealings with the King's Commissioner. The French had deliberately set up divisions between the various classes which had not hitherto been in existence. The children of the people of rank were brought up in French institutions, the sons in seminaries and military colleges, the daughters in convents; in short, the social and political conditions of the *Ancien Régime* in France were introduced bodily into the island. The country was, however, exempted almost entirely from taxation, and its administration involved the Crown in expenses far exceeding any revenue brought in. It is true that even the most generous treatment does not make up for the loss of freedom. The real rulers of the island remained the foreigners, the Governor and the Intendant with their officials, civil and military. The Corsican who would secure any favour for himself or his family must bow down before these, and secure their goodwill. There had been no real institution of nobility upon the island before its conquest; in dress and bearing, and in all their manners and customs, all the inhabitants had been on a level. But the old families, though not a class apart, had been the real leaders of the nation, alike in their civil feuds and in their fight for freedom. It was no consolation to them now for all they had lost that they were raised in rank above the heads of their fellow-countrymen, while forced to bow the knee to the alien.

The Buonapartes, like all their fellow-countrymen, had fought with Paoli for the liberties of their fatherland. Carlo Buonaparte, Napoleon's father, had been a member of the National Assembly which had stood by the Dictator ; he was a well-educated man and had acted as Paoli's secretary. It was he who penned the eloquent proclamation in which the General summoned the Corsicans to their last fight. His wife Lætitia had gone with him into camp, and was present with him at the last battle ; Carlo, however, did not accompany his leader into exile: like most of the other Corsicans, including all his own relatives, he remained at home at Ajaccio and strove to accommodate himself to the new condition of things. The family, which had many branches, all of which clung together, was one of the most respected in the island, but not one of the richest. A house in the town, a couple of farm-houses with some meadows and vineyards hard by as well as a little farther away among the hills, constituted the sum of Carlo Buonaparte's property. He was obliged therefore, in course of time, as the number of his children increased, to ingratiate himself with the conquerors in order to better his fortunes. His natural ability, together with his French education and the good repute of his family, helped him in this. After he had taken his doctor's degree at Pisa, shortly after the birth of Napoleon, he was appointed a magistrate and was twice sent to the French Court, first in 1776 and then in 1778, as a representative of the Corsican nobility. For these honours he was largely indebted to De Marbeuf, the King's first official of the island, who seems to have become an intimate friend of the family, and who stood

godfather to Louis Buonaparte. It was by Marbeuf's recommendation that Carlo Buonaparte, on his second journey to France, took with him his sons Joseph and Napoleon as well as his wife's young stepbrother Fesch, with a view to putting them to school in French establishments. Fesch, who was destined for the Church, was placed in the seminary at Aix. Joseph and Napoleon were left in the college of Autun, where the former, who also was intended for a clerical career, was to stay, while Napoleon was only to remain until he had mastered the language of the country. It was on the 1st of January, 1779, that the brothers arrived there. In May, Napoleon was transferred to his real destination, the military school of Brienne.

This was one of the twelve establishments which King Louis XV had founded for the training of his military cadets. Beside the paying scholars, there were in these institutions some six hundred King's Bursars, as they were called, free students for whom the King paid annually 700 francs apiece. To secure one of these scholarships it was necessary, besides producing certificates of poverty and good lineage, to be provided with a recommendation from some person of eminence. This was furnished to Napoleon by M. De Marbeuf. Save for the uniform worn by the youths (blue coat with red waistcoat and trousers), the college at Brienne, which numbered from one hundred to one hundred and fifty students, had nothing about it to remind them of the military vocation. It was under the management of the Minorites, who kept the entire work of teaching in their own hands. The course of instruction, for the most part scanty enough, comprised the study of

French literature and composition, history, geography and mathematics, and above all religious doctrine, together with a little Latin and German. No provision whatever was made for drill, or any other kind of preparation for military service. It was, in fact, a boarding-school entirely in keeping with the character of the Minorite Order, and its chief characteristics were its religious atmosphere and seclusion. There were no holidays, not even on Sundays. None of the boys were allowed to receive from their homes either money or presents, nor were they ever allowed a vacation at home. It was, in short, an institution conducted in the true spirit of the *Ancien Régime* with its combination of Church, Crown and Nobility. The families, whose sons were Napoleon's schoolfellows, had been connected with the service of the Court for centuries. In their eyes there was nothing remarkable or incongruous about the character of the place.

But what was this young Corsican to think of it all? Everything about it, the sense of imprisonment within its cloisterlike walls, the methods of restraint, the arrogance of his French schoolmates, who amongst other forms of teasing twisted his name "Napoleone" into the nickname "La paille au nez," the bleak climate of the barren district of Champagne, made him think longingly of all he had lost, of the freedom and of the blue skies of his Corsican home. As someone has well remarked, his situation was like that of a boy from Alsace-Lorraine placed in a Prussian military academy after the war of 1870. What wonder that his natural independence of spirit should have its outcome in a feeling of bitter hatred, and that

he should fall a victim to melancholia and home-sickness!

We must not make too much, however, of this aspect of his school existence: he made some friends among his schoolfellows, to whom he remained faithful in after years, and to whom he showed favour when at the height of his power, for it should be noted that with all his powers of hating, Napoleon was never guilty of ingratitude, and was more liable to forget injuries than kindnesses. If we are to attach credence to the statement of one of his chiefs (whose trustworthiness, however, has been called in question), he gave evidence of a friendly, modest, honourable, grateful character, and his bearing was marked by self-restraint. With his teachers he seems to have had quite good relations, and on them, as upon other associates of his youth, he bestowed benefits and honours in the days of his greatness in a measure often far beyond anything they merited from him. But he could not reconcile himself to life in this foreign land. His entry into the corps had been due only to consideration of personal interest. He was bound by no other tie to the King of France, he was drawn by his every feeling to the land of his birth. He did not take a leading place among the students in the institution. The difficulties he met with in mastering French were sufficient to keep him back, at least in the first years. He did, however, distinguish himself in mathematics and in history, as he has himself told us. These things he required for his career, for which he prepared himself with industry and zest from the beginning; it was for the Navy that he was destined originally, like an older cousin, named Casabianca, who, as Captain, lost both his

ship and his life at the Battle of the Nile. History gave him food for the daydreams in which he was wont to indulge in a kind of wooden alcove that he had contrived for himself in a corner of the garden. In this retreat, to which no one else ventured to come, he would read in his Plutarch of the great heroes of olden days who offered up their lives for freedom and fatherland. With the stories of those sublime figures of the ancient world, he would, in his own mind, connect the legends of Corsican patriots down to the days of Paoli himself, that champion of liberty, who personified to him all the martial glories of Greece and Rome.

He was nearly fifteen years old when he again saw his father, who had come to France to take his son Lucien from Autun, where he had previously been, to Brienne, and his daughter Marianne to stay with two of her cousins at Saint-Cyr. The letter addressed to his young uncle Fesch, in which Napoleon alludes to this event, has always been regarded as a striking indication of the maturity of his character, by reason of the coldly calculating tone by which it is marked. He discusses in it the wish of his elder brother, Joseph, to abandon the idea of becoming a priest and to enter the army instead; and it is, indeed, remarkable with what seriousness and in what clear, well-balanced language Napoleon enumerates all the objections against this course. He "has received an education," he writes, "for a clerical career; it is very late now for him to turn back; the Bishop of Autun would have given him a good benefice, and in time he himself would have become a bishop: what a good thing this would have been for the family. The Bishop has done his best to get him

to remain, and has assured him that he would not regret it, but it is no good, he persists in his idea: I applaud his decision, if it comes from the real vocation for the life of a soldier, certainly the finest life of any, and if the great Author of all has implanted in him, as in me, a decided bias towards the military career." But what branch of the King's forces did Joseph want to enter? His deficiency in mathematical knowledge and his rather feather-brained character unfitted him either for the engineers or for the artillery; doubtless he had the infantry in view. "Good; I understand. He will do nothing all day, he will just lounge about; after all, what is a poor devil of an infantry officer—three-fourths of his time a *mauvais sujet?* And that is just what neither my dear father, nor you, nor my mother, nor my dear uncle, the Archdeacon, would like to see him. But Joseph has already shown some signs of a tendency towards frivolity and extravagance." "In short," so the letter ends, "a last effort should be made to reconcile Joseph to the idea of becoming a priest. Should this fail, it would be well for his father to take him back to Corsica where he would have him under his own eyes and where they might try to apprentice him to a notary."

This letter would undoubtedly give one the impression of an alarmingly precocious mind, were it not that the tones of his father's voice may be discerned in its every sentence. It is quite clear that on the occasion of this visit Carlo Buonaparte had held forth to Napoleon in this vein upon the elder brother, whom Napoleon himself had not seen for years. Carlo Buonaparte had intended to return once again to Brienne, but the condition of

his health, as to which he consulted the Paris doctors, forced him to go back to Corsica direct: so this was the first and the last time since Napoleon's departure from Ajaccio that father and son came together, for in March of the following year Carlo succumbed to the illness which was to bring about the death of the Emperor himself in St. Helena. He died at Montpellier, whither he had gone by the advice of the local physician in the hope of a cure.

Napoleon was then at the military school in Paris, which he had entered in October, 1784. This institution also was a creation of Louis XV. It was a reproduction of the school at Brienne upon a higher plane: it was marked by the same mixture of aristocracy and clericalism: the conditions of the life were still more aristocratic, and were in fact, almost too elegant for students, some of whom were scantily provided for, though many of them came from the first families in the land. Generals, ministers, and Court officials were to be found among the administrators of this establishment. Over and above the ordinary curriculum, which was on the same lines as that of the lower institution, the students in this higher course were trained in such accomplishments of a gentleman as riding, fencing and dancing, besides elementary military drill. In view of their future calling, the students were divided up into companies, and the better, or older ones amongst them were appointed non-commissioned officers. Among these, Napoleon never took his place, but that was because of the very early date at which he got his commission. He seems to have come out of himself more in Paris than in the provincial town. He made some good friends, if he also made some enemies. Among the latter, none

was more notable than De Philipeaux from Poitou, the same who, as emigré, defended St. Jean D'Acre against him; Philipeaux would seem to have been amongst those who hurt Napoleon's Corsican sensibilities. There is a caricature drawn by one of the students, in which Napoleon is depicted preparing to set out to the relief of his hero Paoli, whilst a professor is anxiously trying to hold him back by the queue of his wig. He made so little effort to dissemble his character as a Corsican rebel at heart, that he would seem to have come into conflict with his teachers in this respect. When, upon one occasion his confessor approached him on the subject and reminded him of his duties towards the King, he quitted the confessional brusquely, with the words: "I did not come here to talk about Corsica. It is not a priest's business to catechise me on the subject." Two notes handed down to us by Las Cases, serve to give us some idea of the strong, but at the same time singular and uncomfortable, impression he made upon his French associates. One of these, from the pen of M. Demairon, who was his master in the art of French composition, characterises his literary style as "granite, hot from a volcano." The passionate rage animating the heavy-handed sentences that mark his youthful epistles, could not have been better described. Our other witness uses a phrase which was afterwards to sound prophetic: "A Corsican by race and nature, he will go far, if circumstances favour him."

Napoleon became an officer in the autumn of 1785. On the 30th of October, he made his way to Valois with his friend and comrade Desmazis, there to join the De la Fère regiment of artillery. It was one of the best regiments in the army, and it was a distinction

for the young officer to be attached to it. It was here that Napoleon acquired the rudiments of his military education. On the 10th of January, 1786, he received his epaulettes, his commission being made to date from the previous 1st of September. His pay came in all to 1120 francs a year. He received no allowance from home, but by careful economy he managed to get along on these slender means, and he may be said, therefore, to have been quite independent now at the age of sixteen. In the following September he returned home on leave, after seven years' absence from the island. After he had already been at home six months, Napoleon's leave was prolonged until September, 1787, as the result of an appeal which he made in the spring for this extension on the score of sickness; on returning to France in that month, instead of rejoining his regiment he proceeded to Paris, where his "semestre," to use the technical expression, was extended once again, so that he was able to return to Corsica on the 1st of January, 1788, and to remain there until the end of May: an absence from his corps of, in all, twenty-one months. Strange as may seem to us this long interruption of his military service, there was nothing unusual about it in those days. Napoleon's messmates were almost equally well treated in the matter of leave. And now, owing to the death of his father, his presence in Corsica once again became necessary for family reasons, his brother Joseph (who had taken to the law) not having yet completed his studies in Pisa. This involved a visit to Paris in the autumn of 1788.

In the meantime the regiment had several times changed its station. During the Dutch disturbances upon the northern frontier it had been sent first to

Douai, then to the coast, and later, in December, 1787, to Auxonne on the Saône. It was at Auxonne that Buonaparte rejoined it, to remain with it for more than five years, and it was now that his education as a soldier began in real earnest. Papers on artillery, still extant in his handwriting, give evidence of his zeal and of his clear grip of his special work both in theory and practice. That he won the approval of his superior officers is shown by the fact that he was appointed a member of a committee of officers by General du Teil, an authority upon the science of artillery. His lot here at Auxonne, as at Valois, was the life of a small garrison town. He proved himself a good comrade, setting store by the good name of the corps, and by the maintenance of unity between all its members, the younger officers in particular ; of this fact also we have written evidence in the shape of a scheme drawn up by the lieutenants of the regiment, for the establishment of a military Court of Honour, the task of the actual wording of this scheme having been entrusted to him. He had the entrée to the houses of the best families in the little town, and established friendly relations with them, to which in later years he often gratefully looked back.

But all this left his inner nature untouched. His soul remained weighted with feelings of loneliness and vague melancholy ; feelings common to most men of mark in the days of their youth, and due merely to unsatisfied cravings after action and power and fame. But in Napoleon's case these feelings were blended with the Corsican's hatred against the race that had robbed him of his home—the race amongst whom he was condemned to live, almost like a host-

age for the submission of his vanquished countrymen. Letters which he wrote at this time give us glimpses into his state of mind. In one of them, written on the 26th of April, Pasquale Paoli's sixtieth birthday, we find him expressing himself as follows: "Did the thought ever occur to his father, Hyacinth Paoli, on the occasion of his birth, that one day this son of his would be reckoned among the bravest heroes of the new Italy? The Corsicans in those unhappy days were bowed down more than ever under the tyranny of the Genoese. They dragged on their wretched and humiliating existence under conditions lower than that of the beasts. In 1715 the inhabitants of some of the valleys had risen in arms against their tyrants, but it was not until 1729 that that revolution came about which was marked by so many deeds of bravery and patriotism that it may be compared to the great days of Rome. . . ." "*Eh bien!*" he exclaims, "let us go into this matter a little. Did the Corsicans do well to throw off the yoke of Genoa?" And having invoked the history of the island and the teachings of Rousseau in their defence, he concludes with the words, "Thus by all the dictates of justice, the Corsicans were right to shake off the Genoese yoke, and would be right to do the same with that of the French. Amen." Eight days later we get another peep into the sombre workings of his mind. "For ever lonely in the midst of men, I continually withdraw into my innermost self, to give myself up entirely to sad musings. Whither do my thoughts take me? Towards death. In this early morning of my days, I have a long life to look forward to. For six or seven years I have been far from my fatherland. How keen will be my

joy, four months hence, when I see my countrymen and my relatives once again! Can I not make sure from the sweet feelings called up in my heart by the memory of the happy hours of my childhood that my bliss will be complete? What madness is it then that makes me wish for death?" That is the question he asks himself, and his answer is, that he wishes to die because freedom has vanished from the world, and because men have become knaves and cowards. "What will be the spectacle that my home will present to my eyes? My countrymen burdened with chains and on trembling knees kissing the hand of the oppressor." His thoughts go back to that proud past when the Corsican held himself erect and returned home happily to his wife as soon as his day's work was done. To-day the French have put an end to virtue as well as to freedom. "What have I to do in a world which forces me to give praise to men who bid me hold virtue in contempt"? "Were I able," he exclaims, "to set free my country by a single blow, I would at once plunge the avenging sword in the heart of the tyrant." And the whole passage, with its strange mixture of a sombre melancholy, misanthropy, and self-pity, concludes with these words, reminiscent of Faust: "Life is a burden to me, for I can no longer experience joy or pleasure, and everything adds to my pain. It is a burden to me because the men amongst whom I live and must continue to live are as far removed from me in their ideas and modes of thought as moonshine is from sunshine. I have nothing that makes life worth living—hence my disgust with everything." At a later date, when Napoleon had learnt to master these feelings, he traced them to three different and

successive frames of mind : sheer boredom to begin with, then low spirits, and then a mood of despair tending towards suicide. The man who has to drag on his existence in surroundings of depressing monotony without prospect of change, asking himself day after day why he was born, is in truth the most miserable of mortals.

It is noteworthy that the first ambition that entered into the head of this genius of action, this mightiest of world-conquerors, was to achieve fame as a writer : he wished to be the historian of Corsica—a wish in truth natural enough in view of his circumstances at the time and those of his country. I can find no evidence of Napoleon's thinking of himself at this period as the liberator of Corsica, as Paoli's successor. The bonds of subjugation were still too heavy, so it seems, to be shaken off : but to kindle a sacred fire of hatred in the hearts of his countrymen, to evoke proud memories of the heroic actions of their forefathers, and thus to make ready for the longed-for day of freedom, seemed to him a goal worth struggling for. Already in Brienne he had sought to master the history of his island ; his notes written at Valence show him well acquainted with it, and perhaps the idea had come to him even then of telling the story himself anew. The project is revealed unmistakably in a manuscript which he produced in Paris in November, 1787. This is the rough draft of a preface to what he calls "A Rapid Sketch of Our Misfortune," a work which he proposes to dedicate to his fatherland, impelled thereto by the enthusiasm of youth and aiming at nothing but an accurate statement of facts. "Dear countrymen," he exclaims, "we have always been unfortunate—for the moment we

are the subjects of a mighty monarchy of whose administration we experience only the defects, and we can foresee no solace for our woes but in the course of centuries." On his return to Corsica he set about collecting fresh material for his work and began to renew his knowledge of Italian. He returned to Auxonne full of his projects, and it was here that the coming collapse of the France of the old *régime* forced the pen into his hand and led to his writing the first pages of his historical sketch. The King, when he had called together the States General, had appealed to all his subjects to bring their complaints and their wishes before the steps of his throne. While from all the provinces of France and from Corsica itself the official national representatives were making their way to Versailles with their portfolios, Napoleon decided that he would submit a Corsican document on his own account; speaking, not like those others for a party or for a class, but on behalf of his own ideas of political freedom. This I think explains the form which Napoleon gave to his historical essay: that of a letter to the Minister Necker, the champion of reform in the King's council. Napoleon writes in the person of a venerable man who, in the course of a life of eighty years, has seen the days of his island's freedom, of its struggles, and of its bondage—a favourite idea of his, to which he comes back in other writings of this time. Unfortunately the young lieutenant did not proceed with his undertaking, in fact we know of it only from two letters from Dupuys, who had been Napoleon's teacher at Brienne in the art of composition and to whom the manuscript was sent for perusal. But from the few sentences cited by Dupuys and from the anxious warnings given

by the good priest to his hot-blooded pupil—to whom he is constantly appealing for "*discrétion ! discrétion !*" —it seems clear that its revolutionary character was pronounced.

When in the autumn of 1789 Napoleon received fresh leave of absence and returned once again to Corsica, the *Ancien Régime* had fallen upon evil days in France, but upon the island he found it still in its full force, and the white flag waving over the castles of Ajaccio, Bastia, Calvi; its officials, intendants, customs employés, magistrates and officers, were still in power. In the States General the nobility and clergy were represented by two adherents to the old monarchy: Count Buttafuoco, who in the war for freedom had already gone over to the side of France, and who was regarded therefore by Corsican patriots as a traitor to his country; and the Abbé Perretti della Rocca, who had followed Buttafuoco's lead; while in the lawyer Salicetti de Rostino, and Count Colonna da Cesario Rocca, a nephew of Paoli's, the party of Progress could boast two convinced advocates among the representatives of the Third Estate. But if these were to achieve anything they must attach themselves to the revolutionary party in France. Their ideas and aspirations all tended in the same direction: the France of yesterday had been Corsica's enemy; the France of to-morrow must be momentarily at least its ally. Napoleon arrived at Ajaccio just at the moment when the movement, which here, as in France, took shape first in the large towns, began to assume dangerous proportions. We can imagine with what zest the young officer threw himself into it. Tradition has it that it was he who induced his fellow-citizens to hoist

the tricolour and to institute a National Guard. The effort at revolt was put down, but it broke out only the more vigorously in Bastia, the seat of the Government. There were sanguinary encounters between the people and the troops, some of whom sided with the insurgents. An entrance was forced into the citadel, and the governor was compelled to put on the tricolour cockade and to authorise the raising of a National Guard. According to a trustworthy witness, it was Napoleon who, hurrying over the mountains, had brought about this outbreak also. He and his friends scarcely hoped at this moment to bring about the freedom of the country, nor did the revolutionary party in France entertain any fears as to the loss of the island. On the contrary, good relations existed between the revolutionaries on both sides of the water. The addresses and appeals which were despatched to the French National Assembly by the Corsican patriots, and which Napoleon not only signed but for the composition of which he was to some extent responsible, met with cordial response and led to the decision come to on the 30th of November to accord to the island the rank of a department of the French State and to repatriate its exiled defenders with Paoli at their head in their fatherland.

The change that had come over the position of affairs is made very clear in a new version of the letter on Corsica which Napoleon undertook in the spring of 1790. Just as Necker was put on one side in France as the result of the revolution, so we find him superseded in regard to this communication. It is addressed to the Abbé Raynal, the author of a philosophical history of the East and West Indies, whose writings had exerted a greater influence upon

public opinion than those of almost any other French author of the period, and who must have been in sympathy with Napoleon inasmuch as he had foretold the liberation, not only of the French, but also of the Corsicans, from the hated rule of the monarchy. Napoleon had visited him in Marseilles, where he had been residing since his return from exile (1787), and the Abbé had encouraged him to give a history of Corsica to the French literary world. He had begun collecting his materials, so we gather from the introduction, and had made some progress with the book, when the Revolution broke out, giving Corsica back her freedom, and thus depriving his task of its original aim, that of contrasting the glorious past with the pitiable present. "From the bosom of the nation," he writes, "which has overthrown our tyrants, the electric spark has gone forth; this great noble and enlightened nation has become conscious of her power and her rights. She has become free and she has willed that we should become free as well. She has opened her arms to us and henceforth we have the same interests, the same cares. There is no longer the sea between us." It is Napoleon himself who is uttering these words; he does not put them into the mouth of the old veteran whom he made his spokesman in the earlier composition. In form the treatise is no longer a single letter; it would seem to have been originally a series of three letters, of which only two have come down to us complete. Its tone has become in every way more moderate; it is a victor, a friend of the newborn France, who is holding forth on the great deeds of his own people. There can be no doubt that it reflects Napoleon's new mood. Together with his relatives and adherents, he has sided

definitely with the French Revolution. The institutions which it established; the fact that it threw open to the natives of the island employment in district and departmental administration in the National Guard and in the magistracy, the footing of equality with France upon which Corsica was placed, the fair prospects held out to Corsicans upon the mainland, no less than at home: all these things were calculated to minister to their self-esteem, to silence their old grievances, and to bind them closely and securely to France.

Napoleon's leave would seem to have been extended for six months, a fever which seized him in the spring involving a further extension until the autumn; and he then found himself obliged to prolong his stay until January, 1791, so that in all he had once again absented himself from his regiment for more than a year. He was staying at the Baths of Orezza, in the interior of the island, seeking to regain his health at that small watering place, when Pasquale Paoli, who had been loaded with honours in Paris and was being welcomed home in triumph by his countrymen, returned to Corsica. Joseph Buonaparte was a member of the deputation which the Corsicans had sent to greet their General at Lyons, and Napoleon, it would seem, had drawn up the address in which his native city hailed the arrival of the old hero. If, however, we are to believe what Joseph tells us in his Memoirs, the very first meeting between the two great Corsicans was marked by the first sign of that antagonism which was so soon to sunder them. Paoli, we are told, had been pointing out upon the battlefield of Ponte Nuovo, the positions that had been occupied by the two forces, and had been

explaining the course of the engagement, when Napoleon remarked drily, "Such dispositions were bound to have such a result." In any case, it would seem clear that Napoleon had already become conscious of a certain feeling of opposition to the old General. The mistrust that had been shown towards Paoli, due to the suspicion that he was only awaiting the opportunity of setting Corsica free from France, may have been unwarranted ; an old man now and no longer in full possession of his strength, he may well have cherished the hope that the island might be able to secure the essential attributes of independence, while maintaining its political alliance with France. But he cannot be regarded as a friend of the new France at this time. The French world of thought in which Napoleon was brought up and by which, despite his hatred of the oppressor, his whole nature was permeated, was quite foreign to the mind of Paoli. Whilst Napoleon had almost forgotten the language of his own country during his sojourn in France, Paoli could only write Italian. For him the independence of Corsica remained the one goal to be aimed at. The reception which had been accorded him, alike by the French and by his own people, the position in which he had been placed by the French revolutionary government at the head of the department and of the National Guard of the island, could but fortify him in his views and aspirations. Surrounded by parties, each of which sought to win him for itself, he endeavoured from the first to maintain his independence of them, and assumed an attitude of expectant reserve, even towards a man like Buttafuoco and his associates. Thanks to this method of proceeding, the differences between him

and Napoleon remained for a time undeveloped. The position of the "General," as he was always called, was so strong, and the common interest in the party of progress still so great, that the rivalry of the ambitious leaders had to be kept in the background.

In February, 1791, Napoleon at last returned to his garrison. He had taken with him his brother Louis, at that time a boy of thirteen, whom the family had also destined for the career of an artillery officer, an additional proof of the way in which they had linked their fates with France. The letter to his brother Joseph in which a few weeks later he gives an account of the boy's course of study, which he himself directed, is one of the most pleasing that ever came from his pen, and shows us anew, not only the serious spirit with which he set himself to this, as to every other task, but also the close and tender relations which united him with his own kin. "He is getting on capitally at his work," he writes, "and is now learning to write French; I myself am helping him with mathematics and geography; he is reading history, and altogether he is becoming a great fellow. All the ladies here are losing their hearts to him. He has acquired quite a French style, light and bright. He goes out into Society, bears himself gracefully, and gives out all the customary social passwords with the gravity and unction of a man of thirty years. I can see already that he is going to be the best fellow of the four of us."

In view of the growing disorganisation of the army the military authorities rejoiced to such an extent over every officer who came back to the colours that no difficulties were made when Napoleon went beyond the limits of his leave. Indeed, he was not only

excused, but in addition he was accorded his full pay for the extra three and a half months, and when his regiment was reconstructed upon a new basis in the spring he was promoted to the rank of first lieutenant. However, he was not able to remain in Auxonne, as he would have wished for Louis's sake, but had to return to his first garrison at Valence, where a detachment of his regiment was quartered.

It was here that he heard of the great events of 21 June, 1791, of the attempt of Louis XVI and his family to seek safety in flight—one of the most momentous incidents in the French Revolution, tearing aside the thin veil that covered the ever-widening breach between the crown and the new France. By this act the King made it manifest that he would have nothing to say to the revolutionary movement. The leaders of the National Assembly made vain efforts to postpone the inevitable. The ever-growing breach was especially marked in the south, as Napoleon had been able to note on his journey to Auxonne. He had found the people strong for the Revolution, the soldiers particularly as patriots, but the officers against it as aristocrats. "The women," he writes, "are everywhere royalists. There is nothing to be surprised at in that, for freedom is a far more beautiful spouse than them all and cuts them out." His own regiment was a victim to these dissensions; half of his comrades, amongst them his best friends, left the colours, which they felt were soiled by the Revolution. He himself plunged only the more readily into the revolutionary vortex. As in Ajaccio, so in Auxonne and Valence, he frequented the political clubs and gatherings; he gave his signature to revo-

lutionary addresses, amongst others a document calling for the sentencing of the King to death, came forward himself as a speaker, and daily gathered together his non-commissioned officers to read to them the Paris newspapers. "At ease in my mind," so he writes to a friend, "over the lot of my country and the fame of my friend (he means Paoli), I have now no care save for the common fatherland; so in this hour of leisure left to me from the day, I shall just indulge in a chat with you, and rest a brain full of important affairs of State, and a heart full of the thoughts of men for whom one has regard and from whom one is unwillingly severed."

Absorbed though he was in all the great questions of the day, the course of his reading, to which he set himself systematically with his pen in his hand, may be traced with precision. Previously he had been given to reading at random, now books about history, now geography, now natural history; but from this time onwards he devotes himself to the perusal of political treatises. From a history of the Sorbonne, from the Memoirs of Duclos and from a History of the French Nobility by Dullaur, he extracts instances of the cruelty and treachery of the *Ancien Régime*, of the degeneracy of the nobility and clergy, and of the despotism of the Church and the throne. Nor did he put aside his own literary projects; he resumed his old idea of writing a history of Corsica; he now thought of producing it in the form of two volumes; he entered into negotiation with two publishers on the matter, and applied to Paoli for assistance in regard to material for the work. He was, however, to be disappointed in both respects; neither the publishers nor the general would have anything to say

to the undertaking. He had sent Paoli at the same time a pamphlet full of violent accusations against Buttafuoco, which he had delivered as a lecture in the club at Ajaccio, and which he had now had printed. But the general looked with equal disfavour on the attack upon his old friend and on the projects for the History of Corsica. He was not in a position to get out his documents from the boxes in which they were kept; moreover, history was not a task to be undertaken by a man in his youth; he held also that the history of Corsica was not of sufficient importance for the world at large. He advised Napoleon to follow the advice that had been given him by the Abbé Raynal, and to content himself with making a collection of such brief records and anecdotes as might be adapted for portraying the heroism of the Corsican character.

The young officer, however, had already begun to busy himself with another project, in which the Abbé Raynal seems also to have encouraged him. The Academy of Lyons had announced that a prize, founded by Raynal himself, should be awarded for an essay upon the question what truths and what feelings were of most importance to men for the achievement of happiness. This was a task that fitted in very well with Napoleon's mood of the moment; he sent in his essay in August. It is difficult to give a clear resumé of its contents, for it is badly put together and full of repetitions. But it is necessary for us to consider it side by side with the other products of his pen, for none of them affords us a deeper insight into his soul. It is more than a study of politics and philosophy: it constitutes a series of self-revelations, conscious and unconscious, comparable with those of

Jean-Jacques, and calling almost for as much consideration as actual incidents in his life.

It is impossible, for instance, not to have Napoleon himself in mind when we read his description of the feelings one experiences on returning to the land of one's birth. "You hasten through the scenes of your childhood's joys, the witnesses of the emotions that attended on your first experiences of human nature and the first awakenings of sorrow in your heart. In spirit you live those days over again, and taste their happiness afresh. Your love for your fatherland is rekindled in your heart." He conducts the reader to the summit of the Corsican hills, in the glow of the setting sun, or to the shore of the sea that foams around the island cliffs, where the spectacle of the day star setting in the bosom of the infinite expanse fills one with melancholy. He shows us the interior of a peasant's hut at the close of the day's work; we stand with him on the height crowned by the monument of St. Remy; below it extends the plain of Provence, on which the Romans set their mark two thousand years ago, and where a hundred thousand of the Cimbri lie buried. The Rhone flows in the distance, swifter than an arrow. A road runs on the left: at some distance is a small town; nearer at hand a herd in a meadow. "You feel as though you were living in a dream: your heart is a prey to emotion." Pictures such as these do not merely recall Rousseau's pictures of Nature; they are the records of feelings actually experienced by the writer in the course of those long roamings, of which, like Rousseau, he was so fond.

No doubt his further reflections on the nature and significance of our feelings towards the State show also recollections of Rousseau. So too the principle that

is made the basis of the whole, that feelings rising to the height of passion must be controlled and curbed by reason, is, as has been rightly remarked, a leading idea in Emile. But far more striking than such similarities of thought is what is peculiar to Napoleon, and even more directly opposed to his teacher. This shows itself not merely in his direct commendation of the studies that had delighted him since his days at Brienne; as when he praises mathematics and logic, and in the same way history, "that basis of moral science, that light of truth, that destroyer of prejudice," as the surest guides for the path of life; but the contrast goes much deeper. To use his own expression, the great emotions—that is to say, those which are directed to the world of the State and its ideals—are those that are characteristic of the soul of Napoleon. With him they amount to a passion for the peculiar creative power of the State and of organised society, as contrasted with those more common desires that are destructive of such ideals. What he admires are the great men, who, filled with such emotions, build up states, and give them freedom and power; his heroes from Plutarch, and the peoples whom they penetrate with their spirit. And yet these noblest stirrings of the soul can work destruction if, like overflowing mountain torrents, they break over their banks.

"Emotion is like the Danube at Donaueshingen: a child could turn it from its course; but a couple of hours' journey down the valley it may flood whole provinces and bring whole cities to destruction." Reason must ever be stronger than the stream of the feelings, however generously it may flow; but, under the restraint of reason, the power of the feelings should become mightier and more creative.

Rousseau also has written that in strength lie the foundations of every virtue. But the heroic tone ringing through Napoleon's every sentence is not within the compass of the author of the new Heloise. His gospel of nature preaches gentleness and idyllic joys—you seem to hear the notes of the shepherd's flute; while it is the warrior's trumpet that resounds through these youthful writings of the young Napoleon. Like Napoleon, the Citizen of Geneva was a foreigner in France, having been taken from his own country while still a boy; but the city of his origin could scarcely boast a history of its own; its great days dated from many generations back. Although a free state and independent, it was permeated by the French spirit, and its sons had sought and found riches and honours in Paris. So the greatest of them all had neither tasted the bitterness of such national memories as had poisoned Napoleon's youth, nor experienced the growth in his heart of that sentiment for the State which had been implanted in the young Corsican by the history of his fatherland. For Rousseau the State has no other use than to protect the weak, to curb the ambitious, to ensure to every man that to which he is entitled; and finally to produce men who, like himself, should be able to taste life's joys and appreciate its beauties in full liberty. He is more disposed to hate the State than to serve it. In his eyes the soul of man is disfigured and distorted through the constraining influences of society and civilisation, in which he finds the first cause of all social differences. By nature men are equal like the denizens of the wild, and civilisation is nothing but a falling away of manhood from itself. For Napoleon, on the contrary, man

exists for the sake of the State. Man is born for action ; he must strive for freedom and for the power of the State : for him freedom and power are inseparable. In Rousseau's theories, as in his life, even the family is placed in the background, while Napoleon, like a true Corsican, is rooted in his family. Finally, Rousseau is absorbed entirely in his own existence, in his own happiness ; whilst Napoleon gives his whole mind to the fate of his country and his family, and the course of the Revolution.

Napoleon himself was conscious of these differences of outlook. In a brief note which he penned upon Rousseau's famous treatise on the origin and causes of human inequality, he characterises it as being written from the standpoint of the man without home, family or social ties who has existed without strife and without friendship. And he protests his disagreement with the doctrine emphatically. From his own standpoint as citizen of a State it was unthinkable to him that men should ever have been able to exist without the need of wife or home or friends. "In the progress of centuries," he says, "the peoples thus growing up in a state of nature have multiplied side by side, till as they came to deal with each other, and the earth no longer yielded its treasures without cultivation, there came into existence property, social distinctions and governments, and in their train there came self-seeking, pride and ambition. Man possessed from the beginning sense and reason, otherwise he could never have had the feeling of obligation to virtuous conduct, and the happiness that virtue gives. It is not our Citizen of Geneva that can teach us this."

It follows from this that the Socialistic element in

Rousseau's theory of the State is excluded at the very outset from Napoleon's political system. He recognises the existing inequalities of society. The Government may be the highest link in the social chain, provided only that the beggar is not the lowest. "Let this link be," he writes in the *Discours de Lyon*, "the small proprietor, the small shopkeeper, or the skilled artisan, or every other man who with a reasonable amount of work can feed, clothe, and provide a home for his family." Here again Paoli is his example. He appeals to the agrarian policy and calls it his greatest service to his people that he secured for each sufficient property to supply him with sustenance at a cost of little labour. We already recognise in this and in other points the system of the Emperor, which included among its fundamental principles the security and contentment of the peasants and manual labourers.

The theory of the State put forward by Napoleon in this essay of his is essentially that of the ruler. For the emotions and the aspirations by which he sets store are those of the ruler, the hero. "The occupations of the husbandman and the artisan," so he writes, "have a restraining effect upon the imagination: the man who is fortunate enough to dwell in the country is free from that restlessness which works havoc with the idler; he does not stand in need of so highly developed a reasoning power in order to keep his feelings in check." "The man who undertakes no manual labour requires a stronger will: the force of the current is more powerful, and it is necessary that the dams should be more powerful too; he stands more in need of self-study, he needs the whole force of his reason." These words picture better than any

others that could be used Napoleon's frame of mind —they tell us of his heart full to overflowing with longings after action and power, and at the same time, of a force of will which controlled these emotions with the iron bands of cool observation and calculation. How hard he had to struggle, however, against the force of the fire within him, how keenly alive he was to the tragedy that like a dark cloud attends upon all human happiness and greatness, is made manifest by the truly impressive words with which he proceeds: "does he feel the fire of genius in his veins? Luckless man if so—I pity him: he will be the wonder and the envy of all those who feel as he does, but the most miserable of them all. The bonds of equality are broken: his whole life will be unhappy! Ah that fire of genius. But let us not take it too much to heart, for it comes so rarely! How many years must pass by before even one such individual comes into the world! Men of genius are like meteors destined to burn in order to illumine the century in which they live."

It is curious to note the place that Napoleon gives to ambition. He reckons it among the destructive impulses, three in number, which in his eyes are but forms of egoism: he calls it the vice of a man's maturity, the vice that seizes a man when he has grown weary of the enervating passions of his youth, and that dangles before his eyes deceptive dreams of new delights, only to leave him a victim in his old age to his unsatisfied cravings for power. He thinks of this sentiment of ambition as a hideous phantom with pallid features, wild eyes, unsteady gait, and with a sardonic smile upon its lips; to the man who falls under its mastery misdeeds become moves in a

game, cabals mere means to an end: lies, slanders, and abuse, mere arguments and figures of speech. And when at length he reaches the pinnacle of power, the homages of the peoples are a weariness to him. Napoleon instances the great men of the world who have fallen victims to this vice of ambition: those great men in whose ranks he himself was one day to be numbered. They begin with Alexander and Cæsar, and come down to Cromwell and Charles V and Phillip II, Richelieu and Louis XIV. "Ambition," he proceeds, "takes Alexander from Thebes to Persia, from the Granicus to Issus, from Issus to Arbela, and from thence to India; ambition drives him on to conquer and devastate the world, without ever satisfying his lust, until at last, consumed by his own flame, he takes leave of his senses, imagines himself to be a god, the son of Jupiter, and insists upon others sharing this belief." Surely, when he wrote these words Napoleon himself must have looked Ambition in the eyes. Does it not seem in truth that it must have been given to this youth to have looked into the future as in a mirror, and to have seen himself pictured in it as the world-conqueror? Does it not seem as though he were trembling over his own destiny? He turns away from it as from some spectacle of mad frenzy, and he summons up a vision in its place of a different race of heroes, as though he would claim their succour in his resistance against the phantom that has disquieted him: Dion, who rescued the city of his birth from the yoke of tyrants, Fabricius, Cincinnatus, and Lycurgus, all the champions of liberty in the spirit of citizenship, whose lofty features he had pictured to himself as a boy in Brienne, in the days when he was reading his Plutarch and beguiled away the sadness,

that came from his consciousness of subjugation, with dazzling visions of the great days of old. Paoli also takes his place among these; indeed, he stands out in Napoleon's judgment as the noblest exemplar of the champions of freedom and justice.

But is there not ambition underlying the actions even of these heroes? It is noteworthy how Napoleon, even where he has been describing the aspect of this phantom of ambition, comes upon this reflection and how he deals with it: "But the ambitious men may do good; is it not comforting for the reasoning conscience to be able to say to oneself: I have secured the happiness of a hundred families: I have allowed myself to become a prey to anxiety, but the State has reaped the benefit; my fellow-citizens live in quiet, thanks to my own unrest: they have reaped comfort from my cares, joy from my sorrows." "That is true undoubtedly," Napoleon proceeds triumphantly (and it would seem as though he were justifying by anticipation the Eighteenth Brumaire): "but you do not reflect that Fabricius, Cincinnatus, Catinat, thought so too, and these were not ambitious men. He who wishes to come to the front by his own efforts, and to contribute to the happiness of the State, is the man of virtuous principle, full of courage, strength, and genius: such a man will master Ambition instead of being mastered by it, he will turn both emotion and will to account: he is possessed by the spirit of moral liberty."

So much for the ideal world of which Napoleon dreams in his twenty-second year. But he is aware already that the reality does not correspond with it, that three-fourths of mankind, as he says, are the slaves of their passions, ever seeking, never attaining

happiness. That sentiment of misanthropy which dogs the footsteps of genius, and which Napoleon himself saw lurking behind the visionary eyes of Rousseau and behind the mocking smile of Voltaire, and which had laid long since its frigid hand upon his own burning brow, confronts us in this very writing amid all his enthusiastic glorifications of heroism. Alas, if that ideal world should reveal itself to him as a world of illusion, if that enthusiasm for liberty that had drawn him close to the race he once hated should disappear, if the land of his birth should be given up as a prey to the ambitious, and even the hero of his youth be estranged from him in the strife of parties! And if that sense of isolation, which so often had contracted his heart in those young days of his, should take him captive again in the hour of his greatness, and his thinly disguised misanthropy, grown intensified, should lead him to despise his ideals!

In the autumn of 1791 Napoleon returned to Corsica on a fresh six months' leave, his presence having become more necessary than ever, from family considerations. The National Assembly, which had come into existence as the result of the Revolution of 1789, had done its work. The new Constitution had been proclaimed and acquiesced in by the King, and France had begun to breathe afresh. It was almost felt that the Revolution was at an end, that the final victory had been won. In all the departments of the country, as in Corsica, the new institutions had come into being, but it was just at this moment that the movement, which had hitherto manifested itself by a series of heavy isolated blows and in the ever-increasing upheaval of the *Ancien Régime*, began to assume, day by day, more universal

and more threatening proportions. The whole organisation of the State was being recast upon the basis of the broadest democracy. The elective principle became established, alike in the Church, in the Government offices, in the Courts of Law, and even in the Army, with which the National Guard had thrown in its lot. This gave the freest scope to the agitation, every election put to the test those principles upon which the central authority of the State had taken its stand, but against which a thousand forces of the *Ancien Régime*, using the legal forms thus provided, offered a fierce resistance. Election after election added to the forces of destruction. Differences and enmities, dating from hundreds of years ago, but kept within bounds under the old monarchy, broke out afresh with redoubled force. Loyalty and reverence towards the throne and towards traditional customs, conscientious objections and clerical obstinacy, devotion to the ideals of liberty and patriotism, and all the impulses of unbridled ambitions, clashed together and grew into a raging whirlpool of passions and emotions. The noblest and the meanest mingled together. While in France the great majority of the aristocracy had felt themselves tied to the monarchy, and had been crushed and almost annihilated by the Revolution, in Corsica the leading families who had been robbed of their power by the *Ancien Régime*, had now been quickly reinstated in their old position of influence, for it was clear that in view of the general hostility against the old monarchy, their members alone would be held eligible for election to posts in the government. But all the old feuds and struggles for power immediately broke out amongst them, everyone

endeavouring to secure the most influential and lucrative posts for himself and his relatives. Paoli was now more than ever the ruling spirit of the island. In Paris the fullest confidence was placed in him: he was at once President of the governing body of the Department and Chief of its National Guard, thus combining the highest administrative and military authority. No election was made to any high office without his sanction, and thus he soon became surrounded by all would-be officials. The Buonapartes, Napoleon included, were amongst those who sought his patronage, but their hopes of seeing the eldest son, Joseph, chosen as representative of Ajaccio among the six members for the island in the National Assembly, were destined to disappointment. It cannot be denied that the General in getting Joseph Buonaparte's rivals, Pozzo di Borgo and Mario Peraldi, elected for Ajaccio, seems to have acted in the interests of Corsican independence better than if he had favoured the claims of the Francophil Buonapartes. It was only a partial consolation for Joseph to be made a member of the governing body of the Department, and shortly afterwards to be given a post in the Administration by Paoli, especially as this involved his going to Corte, the seat of the Government, and being thus severed from his friends in Ajaccio. The brothers, however, were soon to find their influence increased through the death of their great-uncle the Archdeacon, for they thus had placed at their entire disposal, sources of income, the control of which the latter had kept entirely in his own hands. Joseph tells us in his Memoirs how the old priest called together round his bedside the members of the family of which he had so long been head, and

comforted the weeping mother by his assurances as to the abilities of her sons. To Napoleon, we are told, he said: "Tu poi, Napoleone, sarai un omone" —"You, Napoleon, will be a great man."

Napoleon devoted a portion of the money to purchasing, in conjunction with his uncle Fesch, national property (probably confiscated church lands) upon the island. How closely he bound up his destinies with Corsica is shown by another step which he took at the same time. The decree of the National Assembly in regard to the constitution of the National Guard had provided for the establishment of four battalions in Corsica. It seemed desirable for Napoleon, and to the interest of his family, that he should secure a commission in the Ajaccio battalion, and the particular post which he coveted was that of adjutant-major, the third rank in a battalion; he was justified in hoping to get it, as, unlike most other such posts, it was in the gift of the commander-in-chief of the island, General Rossi, a distant relative and good friend of the family, and his appointment would not necessitate his giving up his commission in the Artillery. Rossi was favourably disposed, and at once requested the Minister of War to sanction his nomination of Napoleon.

He made this appeal on the 1st of November, 1791, but there was no answer until January. Napoleon had already begun to feel uneasy, as a decree had been issued to the effect that every officer should rejoin his regiment by the 1st of January, on pain of instant dismissal. Moreover, the National Assembly had put the filling of this post into the hands of the volunteers themselves, and, in addition, had ordered the return of every officer on active service

attached to the National Guard by the 1st of April, with the exception of the chiefs of each battalion and its two lieutenant-colonels. As, however, this decision had not yet been promulgated (although it had received the assent of the Minister), Rossi did not hesitate to nominate Napoleon for the post.

Then came the promulgation, however; and now there was nothing left for Napoleon to do if he wished to remain upon the island and yet avoid having his name struck off the roll of his regiment, but to secure his appointment as first or second in command. He succeeded in this, despite the active opposition organised by his rivals, by abandoning the first place in the battalion to the most formidable of them, Giovanni Battista Quenza. With the co-operation of the Departmental authorities—the procurator-syndic of which, Salicetti, the chief executive officer of the island, hastening back specially for the purpose—the choice was made on the 1st of April, not without scenes of violence and uproar, and fell upon Quenza and Buonaparte. Their opponents had been intimidated by the fact that the four companies of the district had been specially brought into the city, Salicetti having been given full authority for this by the Government; and Napoleon himself had not hesitated to forcibly remove to his home from the house of a rival candidate one of the three Commissioners of the Department whom he had reason to mistrust.

But this skilfully executed *coup*—his first *coup d'état*—was to have unpleasant consequences for himself and his friends. His competitors, who had the greater number of sympathisers among the inhabitants of Ajaccio, were, of course, by no means

pleased at the way things had gone. Eight days later, as the result of continual provocations, there was a sanguinary encounter with the military, for the battalion had remained in the city after the muster and selection of officers. It began with a quarrel that broke out in the main street in the course of some game, the players whipping out their knives, with which the Corsican is always provided. A patrol of the National Guard, led by an officer, came along to bring the disturbance to a close; but the disputants now turned upon the soldiers, and were backed up by the gradually increasing crowd of onlookers, disarmed three of them, wounded a fourth with stabs, and forced the patrol, now the target for bullets from all the windows, to take speedily to flight, to the accompaniment of cries: *Addosso alle berrette!* Napoleon, on hearing the sounds of strife and the shots, decided at once to go to the disturbed district. He hurried to the barrack gate, where a detachment of the 42nd regiment of the line was mounting guard; he called on the officer in command to beat "the assembly," but the latter refused, even when the request was supported by members of the municipality. Thus repulsed, Napoleon collected together a dozen of his own officers to accompany him to the district. In front of the cathedral they came upon a young citizen carrying a gun, which he levelled at them. Napoleon advanced towards him to speak with him, whereupon the man lowered his gun and took a step in advance. Suddenly, seeing five of his comrades coming out of the cathedral to his help, he fired and wounded mortally Lieutenant Rocca della Serra. The alarm was now raised on all sides, and the officers being unarmed took hastily to

flight. No more blood was shed on that day, but the officers and soldiers of the battalion now assembled in the barracks near the seminary, and proceeded to make preparations for resisting attack.

On the following day there was more shooting, and this time on the part of the volunteers, who, enraged at the murder of their officer and bent upon revenge, fired at armed and unarmed alike. Women and children, as well as the Abbé Peraldi, the nephew of the deputy, were among the victims. This state of things lasted, with brief intervals for parleyings, four days longer, the situation becoming more and more serious hour by hour. The National Guard occupied the Capucine monastery of the Genoese tower, whence they commanded all approaches to the city. They cut off the water and food supply, and their numbers being increased by reinforcements from the country, they proceeded to lay waste the vineyards and fields in front of the gates. The civil authorities of the city were at first divided in their sympathies, but presently were carried along by the enraged population, and exerted all their efforts to expel the National Guard. When on top of this M. de Mayard, the regular officer in command of the citadel, who at first had maintained a neutral attitude, decided to comply with their demands, and ordered a hundred men of his regiment with two cannon to advance upon the National Guard, a catastrophe seemed unavoidable. "We decided," writes Napoleon, "to march out in column form and capture the guns; it was a case for bold action, for the combination against us had proved entirely successful, and we could only cut our way out of the net with the sword." At this moment the news arrived that two

Commissaries of the Department were on their way from Corte, and would soon be on the spot; whereupon Mayard, to whom this news had been communicated by Quenza and Napoleon, ordered back the cannon and a period of quiet immediately set in.

We are in possession of the reports of this episode which were drawn up by the various Courts of the Department, together with the strikingly written memorandum from Napoleon's own pen relating to his battalion; but these documents are all animated by a partisan spirit, and they give us no insight into the imbroglio of hatred, treachery, and intrigue. This much, however, is certain, that it was not a case merely of personal feelings, jealousy on the part of the leaders, revengefulness on the part of the ordinary citizen, but that the influences of the revolutionary administration were involved, gradually disintegrating all the social conditions of Corsica. It is clear, too, that the influence of the Church had produced a division in the ranks of the populace, which had been unanimous two years before in acclaiming the Revolution as bringing with it the dawn of Corsican freedom. Ajaccio was a clerical city. The decrees of the National Assembly against the non-juring priests, and the expulsion of the Capucines—an order of monks standing high in the affections of the citizens—had produced very bad blood. It was on this account that the Companies of the National Guard had been ordered into the city. The clerical party had gone so far as to send representatives to Corte to demand permission for the Capucines to return. The return of these envoys on the Monday in Easter week with an unfavourable reply had naturally intensified the feeling of bitterness; the

non-juring priests had said mass openly on that day in the Franciscan convent and thus called public attention to the schism; they had contemplated having a procession through the streets, against which the city authorities had set their face a fortnight before; wild rumours were current to the effect that the constitutional priests were to be driven out and the country people massacred. Napoleon's rivals, Peraldi and Pozzo di Borgo, took no part in these matters; they still posed as friends of the constitution, and they protested against the way in which Napoleon sought to identify them with the fanatics and reactionaries. They turned to account, however, the fanatical antagonism of the masses against the enforcing of the civil constitution of the clergy. This was the strongest support for all opposition against the party of progress, who, for their part, had to rely chiefly upon the revolutionary anarchical instinct of the people. The gulf was already too wide to be bridged: the Church had no thought of giving in, and the defenders of the Constitution had no mind for a compromise. Whoever, therefore, sought to draw nearer to the Church found himself inevitably drawn into the ranks of the party that would have nothing to say to the Revolution. Paoli was at heart as far from being a clerical as were the Buonapartes and their friends; but he had been brought into conflict with revolutionary tendencies at Bastia to a very pronounced degree: there had been bloodshed in the city, and this, indeed, had been the cause of the General's decision to remove the seat of government from that port into the interior of the island. But he was in no way responsible for aggravating the differences, and he had no sympathy with the aggressive-

ness displayed throughout by Napoleon and his associates. Moreover, he had some reason to feel personally offended by Napoleon's action on the occasion of the riotous outbreak: when Mayard's cannon had been directed against the battalion and everything pointed to a catastrophe, Napoleon had sent a message to the Commandant to the effect that he had been ordered by the General to hold the position in the city, although no such order had really been given. Paoli would perhaps have been glad if the National Guard had made its way on this occasion into the citadel of Ajaccio, which the Royalist Mayard had carefully kept closed against him, but, on the whole, he held rather with the people of the stamp of Pozzo di Borgo, who aimed not so much at the carrying out of the Constitution, as at securing the independence of Corsica.

The sequel, as it turned out, was not all that Napoleon would have wished. The Commissioners of the Department, although sympathising with the Buonaparte faction, decided that it was necessary to remove the battalion from the city. It was sent to Corte: hither also Napoleon made his way, but he would seem to have had an interview previously with Paoli with reference to the question of putting him in command of a new battalion. The General, however, abandoned this idea, and the three brothers learnt now just how they stood in his eyes. He refused to entertain the application of Lucien that he should make him his secretary. "He recognises his talents," wrote Joseph to Napoleon, "but he wishes to hold aloof from us, that is his reason. He is afraid of evoking cries of jealousy, which have been becoming all too frequent of late." Napoleon had intended,

immediately after his appointment, to go to Paris on family business, and also in connection with personal affairs of his own—amongst them it would seem the production of a book, as to the nature of which we have no information. One of the chief objects of this visit was to see after his sister, Marianne, at St. Cyr, of whose marriage there was question; it was doubtful whether she could remain on at St. Cyr pending the forthcoming reorganisation of that institution. There was now another matter to be attended to. The position held in the legislature by the representatives of Corsica held out scant promise for a favourable judgment upon the whole episode, and rendered Napoleon's presence in person absolutely necessary; the more so in that he could not tell how his absence from the roll-call of his regiment in January had been taken, and there was danger that he might be deprived of his military rank in France as well as in Corsica. Without delay, therefore, he now set out for Paris on the 28th of May.

These were the weeks during which the catastrophe to the monarchy was in progress. There had been a state of war since the end of April, and the first encounters had been defeats. The former leaders of the Revolution, those who had won Napoleon's enthusiasm in the summer of 1791, had begun to quarrel angrily, just like their contemporaries in Corsica. The new Ministry, which had taken up the reins of government after the fall of Feuillants and which had begun the war, had already fallen a victim to dissensions. Its Girondist wing had been forced to yield to Danton and Robespierre, while the bloodthirsty faction of Marat cried out for a dictatorship,

and the destruction of the King and all aristocrats. Napoleon only saw, like most of his contemporaries, what was happening on the surface ; the irreconcilable nature and the subtle hostility of the anti-revolutionary policy of the Tuileries was as imperceptible to him as the forces and motives which actuated the various factions and their leaders, and the indirect means and secret paths by which they sought to attain their ends. The various parties presented themselves to him only in their rough outlines. One thing only was quite clear to him, as to the rest of the world : namely, that this state of things could not last, that the Constitution, if not the State itself, must experience a general upheaval. That Constitution was at stake to which years before he had taken the oath of fidelity, and which had bridged the sea for him and established bonds of brotherhood between him and the race for which he had felt such hatred. Yet he had begun to look forward to its overthrow and to all that the future might bring, with a sinister calmness and indifference. He despised the populace more than ever ; and the demeanour of the King when the Parisians broke into the Tuileries, had made a strong impression on his mind. "The King bore himself well," he writes : "the Jacobins are fools." Lafayette's opposition to the Jacobins, his letter to the National Assembly, his appearance before it in person on the 28th of June, did not displease him. "All sensible and reasonable people approve of his proceedings," he writes ; but he draws attention to the serious and dangerous side of the matter : "The people, that is to say, the lower classes, are fascinated ; without a doubt it will lead to a conflict which will perhaps make an end of the Constitution." "Those

who are at the head," he proceeds to remark, "are pitiable creatures; it must be admitted, when one sees all this at close quarters, that the populace is scarcely worth all the trouble that is taken to win its favour. You know the history of Ajaccio; that of Paris is very much the same; perhaps its inhabitants are worse still and more petty, more given to grumbling and slandering. You must get the close view of the thing to realise that enthusiasm is merely enthusiasm and that the French race has become senile and has lost its sinews and muscles."

These words are addressed to his brother Lucien, whose revolutionary ardour had begun to disquiet Napoleon, seeming to him inimical to the family's interests; their purpose was to produce a cooling influence upon the emotions of the hot-headed youth. They are, however, a trustworthy indication to his real attitude. Patriotism and the love of liberty had been a safeguard to himself against misanthropy. Now he saw things as they were. "Everyone," he proceeds, "is working for his own interests and is fighting for his own hand with every weapon of fear and calumny. Lower methods of intrigue are being employed now more than ever; these things destroy one's ambition. Those men are to be pitied who have the misfortune to play a part—even those of them who do not need it: to live in peace and quiet, devoting one's self to one's own needs and to those of one's family, that is the kind of life for a man to lead when he is in possession of from four thousand to five thousand livres a year—for the man of from twenty-five to forty, that is to say, who is no longer a prey to wild imaginings." It is to be noted here that Napoleon no longer contrasts ambition, as he did a year

before, with the eager aspirations of the heart towards high ends. He is talking of the kind of ambition that involves desire for fame as well as devotion to fatherland and to noble ideals, and which he now disclaims for himself. He has lost even his desire to win immortality by his pen. "My work," he writes a week later, on the 7th of August, "is finished, revised and copied out, but this being so, nobody will print it. So be it, I have not the least desire to shine as an author."

But Napoleon would not have been himself if the fire in his heart had really burnt out. In the midst of all the agonising experiences that the country was going through—in the midst of all the interests to which he devotes himself, restlessly but cautiously—he managed to find time to take up the study of astronomy. "During my sojourn here," he writes in the same letter, "I have been occupying myself a good deal with astronomy. It is at once a noble science and a very pleasant distraction, and my mathematical knowledge enables me to master it with very little application. This has been a great gain for me." "Believe, obey, work, judge not—these are your duties." He had put these words into the mouth of a man of the people, speaking to his son in his *Discours de Lyon;* but "a lofty soul," he had proceeded at once to say, "a sensitive heart, a wholesome brain, can never be satisfied with this answer." "Virtue," he says, "has its being in courage and strength: energy is the life of the soul as it is the source of the faculty of discernment. . . . The emotions of a Spartan were the emotions of a strong man; only the strong man is good: the weak man is wicked. . . . Without strength, without energy, there is neither virtue nor

happiness." He is continually insisting upon this. We find another indication of it in a verse from a translation of Pope, which we come upon amongst his writings in the summer of 1791 :

> Plus notre esprit est fort, plus il faut qu'il agisse,
> Il meurt dans le repos, il vit dans l'exercice.

The world of his ideals lay around him now shattered into fragments ; but his genius and will-power, and the impulse to exert himself to conquer and to achieve happiness, were still alive in his breast. These attributes were to be developed more fully now that his pathway became more free from the restraints involved in those duties towards the State which had been assumed only from motives of self-interest.

Not that Napoleon stood alone in these respects. Moreover, like every great man who has led his contemporaries towards new goals, he was borne along by their living active influence upon himself. This was the time when the ideals of the century were breathing their last in France. They were meeting their end in common with that old order of things in which they had their origin, but which they helped to undermine. The fountains of the deep had opened, and new unsuspected forces working destruction all around them had come to the front, overwhelming the idyllic dreams of wide-world peace and happiness and freedom, with which the revolutionists had begun their work amid the jubilation of their contemporaries. Both the fanatics and the dreamers among the men who had lately come into power armed themselves with cruelty and cursing and a violent zeal that knew no limits and no mercy. All the evil spirits of ambition, covetousness, cunning, and fear, and senseless rage, as

well as the good spirits of loyalty, unwavering submission to ancestral faith, intrepid strength of will, and high-wrought patriotism, ranged themselves in the ranks of rival forces that sought to establish and assert themselves, and fought one with the other.

Everyday motives and incentives came, of course, to the surface, as Napoleon was quick to see; each for himself became the maxim of the masses, and, to some extent also, of the leaders; the former seeking to escape destruction from the wave of unbridled passions bearing down upon them; the latter grasping at every chance of winning profit and securing power and honours from the work of destruction. Napoleon was not one of these, and from the first he viewed their proceedings with disgust. He soon bethought him, however, of his own powers, which he had strengthened by unceasing work. Whither the path was leading him he knew as little as everyone else, but he, the foreigner, could regard matters with more indifference than the Frenchmen whose lot was more closely involved in the fate of their country. It was only the ideals he dreamed of that had for a while drawn him close to the nation he once hated. Now these ideal dreams were vanishing for which he had sacrificed the independence of his native island and almost his love for it. That melancholy whose dark wings had so often brooded over him in the days of his boyhood and youth had passed away from him. He now regarded it as one of those weaknesses that the strong man must not allow to come over him. But the sense of lonely isolation remained.

Self-mastery, we have seen, was the goal to be aimed at according to Napoleon by the man who would achieve strength, success and happiness. The

untiring way in which he had practised his own precepts now stood him in good stead. "I advise you," so he concludes a letter to his young brother Lucien, "to exercise self-restraint in everything—in everything, mind you, if you wish to lead a happy life." "Do not let yourself be entangled by anything"; that is the advice that he gives Joseph, and that he keeps repeating daily to himself. He had taken up his quarters in the same hotel as his rivals the Corsican deputies. "I have only seen Pozzo di Borgo for a moment, our meeting was formal but friendly." With Peraldi, peace was not to be restored. "Peraldi has declared war against me, there is to be no quarter between us in future," and he adds, mockingly, "it is very lucky for him that he is invulnerable," in his capacity as deputy, Napoleon means; he is referring to the request which he had made to his rival at Easter, but with which Peraldi had not complied. Of Arena, he writes at first, that everybody shuns him, and that he lives for himself alone; but in the next letter Napoleon says, "I got on very well with him, he is an ardent democrat," and he complains of the rather dry tone of a letter written by Joseph to that influential personage, and of the brusque way in which the Department had treated him. "If he looks askance at you, he will make difficulties for you, the others will only give you a weak support; he enjoys great prestige and he has more ability than they, and belongs to the ruling clique. . . . As things stand at present, I am clear only as to one thing, namely, that those should be well treated who have been our friends until now, or may yet become so." "Cling to General Paoli," he writes in his first letter to Joseph, "he is all-powerful and will remain so in that future

which none of us can foresee." The condition of weakness in which Napoleon found France was calculated to make him feel that Corsica was on the way to achieve its freedom. "It seems more likely than ever now," he writes on the 18th of June, "that all this will result in our independence." But this outlook, once the object of his warmest desires, wins from him now no other words than these: "Bear this in mind in what you do." During the following weeks he seems to have abandoned this view of matters; we do not come across it again in his letters. At all events, with the full approval of his family, he seems to have directed all his affairs and theirs with an eye to the continuance of close relations with France. He counsels Joseph, for instance, to get elected to the new National Assembly; he would be a fool if he did not do his best to manage this, for otherwise he will always play a very poor part in Corsica.

He himself remained long uncertain what to do. At last he decided to give up his post in the Corsican battalion and rejoin his old regiment, for the difficulties which had been caused by his absence from his corps and by the Ajaccio affair had now been smoothed away. Not only had the Government accepted his excuses, backed up as they had been by responsible witnesses amongst the Corsican authorities, but in addition he had been given a commission as captain of artillery, dated from the previous February. The other business, however, after having for a moment threatened to take a serious turn—for his opponents, and especially Peraldi, had not hesitated to report to the Minister the insubordination of both leaders of the battalion—was set right by a reference to the Ministry of Justice under a new law, mainly

by the Artillery Committee rejecting these complaints against him. Napoleon, who had not allowed himself to be troubled by all this, refers to it in a letter dated the 7th of August, the eve, as he himself points out, of "a big blaze," so that he writes, "however matters may turn out I shall find myself established in France." Three days later the event occurred that overturned the Bourbon throne—the storming of the Tuileries by the Parisian populace. Napoleon was enabled to see everything at close quarters from the house of a brother of Bourrienne in the Place du Carrousel. When the palace had been seized he made his way into the Tuileries Gardens in the midst of the raging mob just as the Swiss Guards had fallen victims to the treachery and violence of their cowardly assailants. Never had he set eyes upon such a field of carnage, so he said afterwards at St. Helena. His feelings on the subject are revealed in a letter to his brother Joseph, who alludes to it in his Memoirs, but who unfortunately did not preserve it. The King would have conquered, so Napoleon wrote, had he shown himself on horseback. He retained this view afterwards in exile, and it is interesting in this connection to remember a phrase he used in April, 1792, in his account of the riot of Ajaccio: "It is well known how the populace is encouraged by success, but how easily it loses heart when it meets with the slightest set back." In this letter to Joseph he described another experience which is too characteristic to be overlooked. Just after the fighting he came upon a Marseillais who was in the act of striking down one of the King's bodyguards. "I said to him: 'man from the South, let us leave this poor wretch his life.' —'Are you from the South too?'—'Yes.'—'Well, let

him make his escape.'" Hundreds of others turned away their eyes from such spectacles and passed by in silence, even when they sympathised with the luckless victims, and were on their side of politics. The young Corsican belonged to no party and had no sympathy with any section of the mob; hardened to scenes of blood and violence, the drama being enacted in Paris had no terrors for him, but the sight of this unarmed man about to be sacrificed to an aimless lust of massacre invokes his pity and his sense of honour as a soldier, and he intervenes between the murderer and his victim, and he displays the insight and understanding of the psychologist in the way in which he touches his man at the only point where he is vulnerable at the moment, softening him as though by a touch of magic by the memory of his native place. Though his political enthusiasm had burnt down to ashes, Napoleon had not outgrown the humane feelings and lofty sentiments that were so striking in him in his youth: the manliness, the sense of honour, and we may even say that attraction for the heroic, that had filled his soul as a boy still find their place in his heart.

The fall of the monarchy was to effect a change in Napoleon's plans. On the 16th of August, the Royal School of St. Cyr was done away with, and the question of Marianne's future was thus settled. The temporary home that had been found for her there by aristocratic friends was closed. Napoleon decided to take her back to Corsica, whither he himself was going, and on the 15th of October brother and sister arrived at Ajaccio.

Meanwhile the elections to the Convention had been completed. If Joseph once again had failed to

reach the goal of his ambition, at least his party had come out victors in the contest. Out of the six representatives of the island in the National Assembly, in whose hand the destiny of France now lay, four, among them Salicetti, were opposed to Paoli. The Revolution and the war were developing at a rapid rate. The defensive had already been abandoned for the offensive. In the north, as in the Alps, the Republican armies advanced beyond the existing frontiers. The seizure of Belgium led to the breach with England, while the Spaniards also joined the enemies of France. Thus the theatre of war was now extended to the south and the waters of the Mediterranean, and Corsica was to prove one of the most difficult positions which the young Republic had to defend. Thus Paoli's post became more important than ever, the Government at Paris having deliberately made him, as far as possible, all-powerful on the island. To his various other duties they had added, in September, the command of the military district of Corsica, comprising the 23rd Divison. The question now was whether Paoli could adapt himself to this new condition of things, which must link his country by close bonds to the nation against which he had formerly championed it, still further diminish its independence, and make it, with no choice of its own, subject to the ideas of the French Government. Could he now become an enemy to England, which had given him twenty years of hospitality, and which, like his nearest neighbour, Sardinia, had ever been the friend of Corsica? It was a complete *volte-face*, a nullification of his whole past, that the Revolution required from him. It had been his wish to remain above parties: that wish was not

to be fulfilled. He had seen hope for Corsica's well-being in the maintenance of a neutral position between France and England; that hope also was now to prove illusory; he found himself forced to make the tricolour supreme over the waters around Corsica. At the time of the elections for the Convention he had allowed himself, being ill, to be taken unawares by Salicetti; but he again exercised universal influence over the elections to the provincial assemblies which had now to be held, according to a decree of the Convention, for a complete renewal of their membership. The administrative bodies of the Department, the Town Councils, the Courts of Justice, and the Staff of the National Guard and Gendarmerie were all manned by his followers; in short, the General had so contrived that he had Corsica in the hollow of his hand; he had moved the seat of Government and the local Treasury into the interior, to Corte. The citadels of the seaports he had garrisoned with detachments of the National Guard, under the command of officers upon whose fidelity he could rely.

In France, the General's proceedings did not escape notice; and in the clubs of Toulon and Marseilles they came in for very sharp criticism, while in Paris his opponents, Salicetti, Bartolomeo, Arena, and Volney, were influencing the opinion of the Convention and of the public. "The Corsican elections," wrote Salicetti to Napoleon at the beginning of January, "amount to a revolt against the Revolution." He was not alarmed by them, however; he felt sure that the eventual result would be to the advantage of "Liberty" in Corsica in spite of the dark clouds over the horizon; in three or four months they might hope to see more clearly. "If

they are reckoning in Corsica upon the Republic falling to pieces, they are making a mistake, and perhaps we shall see our opponents swallowed up in the abyss that is opening beneath their feet." The letter indicates both the intimate relations existing between the two men and the way Napoleon was now siding definitely with the Revolution. It shows, too, how clearly they saw through the disingenuous intentions of their opponents.

The crisis was brought about by the expedition against Sardinia, which was attempted, after long preparations, in the middle of February, with Corsica for its base, and in which Napoleon was to take part with his battalion. It was the first big affair in which he was engaged; it proved unsuccessful, but certainly not through any fault of his, but through the fault of his superiors, that is, of Paoli and of the officers who were his partisans. Things came to such a pass that Napoleon had to abandon the guns with which he had succeeded in capturing the enemy's position. The squadron had to return without success and not without losses.

Napoleon's attitude towards Paoli during these weeks of extreme tension is characteristic of his far-sightedness and self-control. The General, in his eyes, belonged even yet to the class of those persons who had been friends in the past or might be in the future. Paoli, on his side, wore an equally inscrutable mask, being no whit inferior to his opponent in the art of dissimulation. When the members of the Convention, who in February, 1793, were sent to Toulon—amongst them Salicetti—invited him to go thither, he excused himself on the ground of illness and advancing years, and he advanced the same pre-

text for non-compliance when Biron, the Commander-in-Chief of the army of the Alps, sent for him. Salicetti came himself to the island to Bastia; and when Paoli refused to meet him there, Salicetti ventured to make his way inland to Corte into the lion's den. He also wished to prolong the game. It is possible that Paoli still hoped to maintain a position between the two parties and a strong attitude in his dealings with the men in power in France. But the course of the Revolution was not to permit of this, for just at this moment, the beginning of April, a decisive event had occurred in Paris. Dumouriez's treachery had become known, and the "Mountain" had triumphed over the Girondists, when these tried to turn the catastrophe to their own account and against Danton. On the same day that Dumouriez was unmasked, a denunciation was launched against Paoli from the tribune of the Convention: the blow was struck by no less a person than Lucien Buonaparte. In Toulon, whither he had gone in February, he had denounced the General, in the Jacobin Club, as a traitor to the nation and as a despot of the island, and it was a report drawn up by him that raised the storm against Paoli in the Convention on the 2nd of April. The Convention decided to remove the General from his position and directed the Commissaries of the Republic to conduct him, as well as Pozzo di Borgo, out of the island.

Even after this we find Napoleon making an effort to maintain the General in his position. Among his papers are drafts of two addresses from the Ajaccio Club to the Convention and to the City Council of Ajaccio, in which documents he defends Paoli as the patriarch of Corsican freedom and as the

pioneer of the French Republic. Paoli also bore himself as though a reconciliation was still possible. In a manifesto to his fellow-countrymen he appealed for unity, and gave expression to the hope that the Convention, on being more fully informed, would make good its unwitting error; he addressed to the National Assembly a letter in which he excused himself for not attending in person, on the ground of old age and ill-health; there was nothing he wished for more than the love and esteem of the noble French nation, and he would remain true to the cause of freedom. So long as the strife between the French parties continued, one might, he felt, hope to change the view taken by Convention; even as late as the 5th of June, after the fall of the Girondists, he was devising a plan for this purpose.

But it was all too late, and these efforts were really nothing more than a show, under cover of which the parties to the quarrel pursued their rival policies. Upon the island the cause of the friends of France had been lost since Lucien's denunciation had become known; they held now only a couple of seaports in the north, Bastia and Calvi. When Napoleon was seeking to make his way over the mountains to Bastia, at the end of April, he found his road barred by enemies; it was with difficulty that he succeeded in getting back to Ajaccio, nor was it possible for him to remain even there any longer. He dared not show himself in his own home, and had to hide during the few days of his visit in the house of some relatives, in a suburb. When Giovanni Girolamo Levie learnt of his presence here, a party of his enemies forced their way into the house, and it was only through the presence of mind of his host that

he escaped. He contrived to get to Maginajo on a sailing vessel, and thence to Bastia, where he arrived about the 10th of May. He was still indisposed to throw up the game. On the 23rd of May he and the Commissaries of the Republic, with a small squadron, put out to sea from San Fiorenzo in order to make one more attempt upon Ajaccio, but the effort proved unsuccessful, and this put an end to all their hopes. A proclamation had already been issued against him and his followers by the Consulta, which Paoli had assembled in Corte. His mother and sisters had also been obliged to make their escape from Ajaccio. Napoleon had met them at Torre Capitello, at the entrance of the bay, and had sent them on to Calvi, whither he now followed them himself. Thence he despatched a report upon the condition of the Department of Corsica, in which he mercilessly exposed all Paoli's intrigues, and in which he suggested a plan by which the island might be reconquered. He insists upon the importance of Ajaccio: "Without this harbour the island would have no importance for a hostile Sea Power." It is to England that he thus alludes, the country to which Paoli looked for help. He gives some account, too, of the position of the parties on the island: the party of Independence, entirely devoted to Paoli, forms a small body, he says, but derives strength from its alliance with the Aristocrats or opponents of the Revolution. Only by a policy of alternate threats and flattery, and of connivance at plunder and disorder, had the General managed to keep the Corsicans on his side. "One has to belong to one Party or another, and one chooses that which is triumphant and can indulge in ravaging, looting, and arson;

when you have to make the choice, it is better to devour than to be devoured."

With this expression of opinion, this judgment upon his countrymen and upon the hero of his early days, Napoleon bade farewell to his home; on the 11th of June he set sail with his relatives for Toulon.

CHAPTER II

FROM TOULON TO CAMPO FORMIO

BUT in what condition did Napoleon find France? It was the year of the Terror. The downfall of the monarchy had been sealed with the blood of the King; his slayers were already tearing each other to pieces over their prey. Enemies of the country were threatening its frontiers, or had already crossed them, while entire French provinces and great cities had allied themselves with the invaders. All the parties that had gone under since the year 1789, Legitimists, Constitutionalists, and Moderate Republicans, were forced to one side. There was no longer any possibility of standing neutral. One had to drift with the torrent of blood and fire and to be a partisan of the blind power that was itself the mere creature of anarchy, and that could not for one moment be sure of being its master; or else one had to join hands with the reactionaries and the enemies of France. We need not discuss the question whether some other development might not have been possible—whether in the Revolution a principle of life had gained such an ascendancy that it was impossible to make peace until limits had been set to its action by superior force; or whether it was only that this principle was not given time and opportunity to develop in peace and freedom for the salvation of France. Enough that in the

summer of 1793 destiny must take its course. The old State was destroyed; the new must be organised in the midst of the struggle. There was no other way to carry out the laws to which France had sworn fealty, and build up on a new basis the army and administration, public worship and legal procedure. The greater the danger, the more powerful the enemy, the more terrible the internal disorganisation, the more resolutely must the Revolution pursue its aims, the more closely must it associate itself with the ideals of the nation, the more relentless must it be to all those who set themselves in opposition to it, and to the might of France. There was no other way. The path of the Terrorists led to what the nation desired —strength and unity, victory and greatness for France.

For Napoleon and his associates also there was no choice. There was nothing for them but to side with those Jacobins whom Napoleon, a year before, had set down as "fools"; only in this way could they hope for revenge against their enemies, for the redemption of their homes and belongings, or for some compensation for what they had lost, some refuge in their exile. They were able to count on a warm welcome, for in the general disorder the Government was forced to open its arms to every ally. Napoleon found his regiment on the coast, which it had to defend against the Spaniards, who had been joined by the English. At the end of June he arrived in Nice, and was appointed to the coast batteries by General Jean du Teil, the brother of his old chief. At the beginning of July he would seem to have been despatched by the General into the interior to Avignon, to bring up guns and ammunition. He

found the city and the lower Durance in the possession of the enemy, the insurgent Marseillais. Relief was near at hand, however; a portion of the garrison of Lyons, under Carteaux, now making their appearance, and the insurgents evacuating the city without any serious attempt at struggle. It is uncertain whether Napoleon took part in this affair; it is possible, perhaps probable, that he accompanied the column as far as Beaucaire, a little to the south of Avignon; it is certain, however, that he remained behind in Avignon when Carteaux continued his march.

He was kept here, not only by the mission entrusted to him by the General, but also by the production of a new literary effort which has always been regarded as one of the most valuable documents in connection with his biography, by reason of the light it throws upon the development of his character, namely, the *Souper de Beaucaire*. Like so many of his other early writings, it took the form of a dialogue. Two merchants from Marseilles and one from Nîmes, together with a manufacturer from Montpellier, and a soldier, meet together over their meals at Nîmes. They engage in a discussion of the question of the day. It may be assumed that there was some foundation in fact for this imaginary incident. What is most remarkable in the pamphlet is the nature of the arguments with which the officer, who is clearly Napoleon himself, brings home to both the Marseillais the unwisdom of their revolt. He does not take his stand upon political principles and the differences between parties, the only allusions to these things being put into the mouths of the men from Nîmes and Montpellier. "It is as clear as noonday," he says, "that the Marseillais have hindered the operations of

our armies and have fought against freedom; but all that is not now in question: what I should like to know now is what they can hope for, and what party they can now expect to join." Their disunion, their lack of discipline, their inexperience in war, their inadequate equipment, especially in the matter of artillery, these are the weaknesses which in his eyes render inevitable their overthrow by the Revolution. Their alliance with the enemies of France will help to ensure this result. He makes no account of the fact that the Marseillais had declared for the Republic and the tricolour; Paoli had done the same thing, in order to win time, throw dust in the people's faces, and get rid of the true friends of freedom. He concedes that the "Mountain" had been carried away by its partisan spirit and had been guilty of having recourse to calumnies and slanders, but that he holds was no excuse for the "Brissotins." They ought to have thrown away their arms out of regard for the Constitution and sacrificed their private interests to the public welfare. For the sovereign power is to be found only in the centre of the nation, that is in the Convention itself. "But," he exclaims, "it is easier to cite Decius than to imitate him." The manner of this document is in keeping with the matter. The vague, misty, undecided diction of his youth has disappeared; even when, as in this last sentence, there is some reminiscence of his earlier manner, the language is concise and clear cut. It is the first of his writings that can be said to bear the marks of what we think of as the Napoleonic style.

Genius and good fortune must go together to achieve great deeds. It was fortune that gave

Napoleon his first chance of displaying his great powers. In August the English had appeared before Toulon, where the enemies of the Convention had got the upper hand, and these, hard pressed as they were, had admitted them into the great naval harbour, the only one on the south coast of France.

On the 30th of August General Carteaux, who had meanwhile reduced Marseilles, had appeared before Toulon and begun the siege. But he was ill prepared for it, and was especially badly provided as to a siege train; and to add to his difficulties, Major Dommartin, his chief artillery officer, was so badly wounded at an early stage of the attack that he had to leave the camp. At this moment, on the 16th of September, Napoleon, on his way back to Nice, arrived at the camp. He had with him guns and ammunition, which were so badly needed, and he himself could replace Dommartin. The Commissaries of the Convention, Salicetti among them, were glad to have such a substitute for the wounded officer and exercised their authority by appointing him to the vacant place. Thus it was that the young hero made his appearance upon the scene where he was first to come under the gaze of a wider circle and win his place in the pages of history. He began at once to give proof of all those wonderful qualities which marked him out as a born leader in war—his untiring industry, his sound judgment, his daring courage, and his invincible calm. It would be too much to say that he alone had discerned and suggested the direction given to the attack so as to obtain the command of the inner harbour, and thereby the overpowering of the English fleet; but it was he who first and at once pointed out the key of the enemy's position, the Fort Aiguillettes,

at the extreme end of the peninsula of Le Caire, which divided the inner harbour from the outer roadstead, and he insisted repeatedly upon the necessity of making the first attack on this point, and himself directed it. If the attack failed, that was due to the bad leadership of the general commanding, who, although the son of a soldier, and although he himself had seen service in his youth, had since forsaken the sword for the artist's brush, and had only latterly returned to the career of arms. The English got wind of their danger in good time, and by strengthening the defence at the spot succeeded in keeping it for some time against its assailants. Napoleon remained the life and soul of the siege. The fact that he had the Commissaries on his side made him to some degree independent of the general, to whom the impetuosity, combined with the scarcely disguised contempt shown him by this "Capitaine Canon," as he peevishly dubbed him, was a source of continual embarrassment and annoyance; but it called for a degree of daring, a consciousness of power and mastery such as only Napoleon possessed, to venture upon a step which in the event of failure would bring him almost inevitably to the guillotine. His action was, however, justified by success; he kindled officers and men alike with his own fire. Carteaux, and after him another general of the same stamp, had to leave the camp, but the third commander, Dugommier, fell in entirely with Napoleon's views. The general who had lately been placed in command of the artillery, the younger Du Teil, left his friend practically a free hand. By December, after many fruitless assaults, the revolutionary army were at last in a position to storm the enemy's works, and once again we find the young hero

foremost in the fight: a horse was killed under him; and although he was wounded for a second time (in September, on the occasion of the first assault, he had been grazed by a bullet) by a shot through the thigh, he was one of the first to get within the enemy's entrenchments. The victory was complete: everything fell out exactly as Napoleon had foreseen. In a few days the enemy's ships cleared out of both harbours under a deadly fire from the French guns, and the luckless city had to surrender, abandoned by the foreigners to the vengeance of its remorseless conquerors.

When Napoleon set himself at St. Helena to tell the story of his life, he began with Toulon. And rightly, for it was at this point that the star of his marvellous career rose into sight. All that preceded now lay buried, and a future full of brilliant hopes lay extended before his ambitious brain. In the army there was a universal feeling of wondering admiration for the young military genius. "We are at a loss for words," writes Du Teil to the Minister of War, "to describe adequately to you Buonaparte's conspicuous services; to say that he showed the greatest insight and knowledge and extraordinary bravery is to give a very inadequate account of the merits of this exceptionally good officer." Dugommier writes to the same effect: "even if his services were to go unrewarded and unappreciated, this officer would make his way to the front all the same on his own merits." But the Government was appreciative. In September Napoleon had been promoted to the rank of major, and immediately after the taking of Toulon the Commissaries made him a brigadier-general, at the age of four-and-twenty; on the 6th of February the

Executive Committee of the Convention ratified the promotion.

By this time France had almost rid itself of its invaders, and the rebels had been overthrown or reduced to silence (for thousands the silence of death). Even the insurrection of La Vendée for the moment at least was choked by the streams of blood it had set flowing. The victorious Republic was exerting itself already to attack its enemies within their own confines, behind which it would find waiting for it as allies disunion and weakness, and a mass of ambitious factions, eager for change; for Republican agents were at work in swarms all over Europe from Naples to Amsterdam. The armies of the Republic concentrated in the spring of 1794 towards the north, where the allies were still in possession of some French places, and where they had massed all their strength for the defence of Belgium. Here the French triumphed beyond expectation: the operations of Pichegru and of Jourdan in May and June resulted in the rout of the enemy and again brought the sons of the young Republic to Brussels.

The Alps and Pyrenees still remained the theatres of war. After the English had made their appearance in the Mediterranean, however, it became clear that the Allied Powers, among which dissensions had broken out, must use some special effort to co-operate just at the point where Napoleon happened to be in command. The great danger which had threatened France through the revolt of Toulon had ceased to exist since the 22nd of December. The French were at least now in possession of their own coast line, and there was no longer any possibility of a combination between the allies from the Pyrenees and the Alps. It was all

the more important for the English to make sure of the Genoese coast because the passes over the Apennines offered here the best opportunity to the Allies of combined operations, and to the French the best lines of invasion into Piedmont and Lombardy. This meant bringing Genoa into the conflict, as the mistress of part of this coast, besides involving other Italian states, among which Rome and Naples had already taken sides with the adversaries of France. The English had not delayed to profit by the occasion. Already in October they had made their way into a harbour of the neutral Republic and had captured a French frigate and the ships under its convoy carrying grain destined for the use of the French army. This, then, was the situation with which Napoleon found himself face to face after the recovery of Toulon. No one knew the lie of the land better than he. As "Inspector of the coasts" and as Commander of all the artillery of the "Army of Italy," as the French force massed here under General Dumerbion was called, he was almost in a position of independence.

Among the Commissaries attached to this section of the French forces the most conspicuous was the younger Robespierre, who had already taken his place beside Salicetti at Toulon. Napoleon entered now into very close relations with him and his colleague Ricord, thus putting into practice his precept about keeping on the side of power. In truth he could not do this better than by keeping in with the brother of the great Tribune, who during these very months was rising to the very pinnacle of power in Paris. It was not merely this consideration that drew Napoleon towards Robespierre. He was impressed

by the systematic way in which the proceedings of the brothers were always directed to the objects they had in view and their untiring energy that did not hesitate at employing any means, choosing such means, not for their own sake, but for the sake of the power to which they opened a way. He has given expression more than once to his feelings on this subject. "If Robespierre," he said a little later to Marmont, who was then one of his intimates, "had remained in power he would have been able to strike out another way for himself, he would have systematised the laws and made them paramount; we should have attained this result without shocks and convulsions because it would have proceeded from the exercise of power; we are now trying to reach this goal through a revolution, and this revolution will give birth to many others."

Augustin Robespierre, as appears from a letter to his brother in April, 1749, was more impressed by the talents than by the expressed convictions of the young general, whom he thought of chiefly as the Corsican exile and opponent of Paoli, but whom he took into his confidence, a privilege which was to cost Napoleon dearly enough. There was a question of an attack upon Piedmont. On the 21st of May, at Colmars (Basses-Alpes) there was held a conference of the Commissaries of the Convention and of the Commanders of both the French armies, that of the Alps and that of Italy, at which a plan for combined action, with Coni as its objective, was discussed. It would seem that Robespierre and Ricord together with Buonaparte wished to extend this plan, which had been sanctioned by the Committee of Public Safety, in the direction of placing the starting-

point of the attack on the coast farther to the east, and of thus making the army of Italy do most of the work. The object at which they aimed is indicated in a memorandum from the pen of Buonaparte which Robespierre took with him to Paris, whither he was called by disquieting news of his brother. In campaigns, as in sieges, he maintains in this document, it is important to concentrate one's fire upon one single point, to bring all one's forces to bear upon one attack instead of dissipating them in several. "Once a breach has been made, the enemies' power of resistance is broken; nothing more is needed to capture the place." The blow must be struck at Germany, then Spain and Italy would fall of themselves; no cool-headed man could dream of taking Madrid; and as long as Germany maintained a threatening front it would be dangerous to penetrate into Italy. Buonaparte concludes his paper with these words: "The two armies—the Army of the Alps and the Army of Italy—must be made into one with a common centre and animated with the same spirit." Apparently we have before us here the ground lines of the plan followed by the young general in his Italian campaign, for it was directed from the beginning as with a view to an ultimate advance through the Alps against Germany, and we shall see presently his attitude towards the separation of the two armies and the premature invasion of Italy.

According to Buonaparte's plan, Corsica was among the positions most to be aimed at. The English were now putting out all their efforts to get possession of the island. In February they had taken San Fiorenzo. The attempt upon Bastia which Nelson then undertook had an immediate effect upon the opera-

tions of the Army of Italy. This had to put a stop to its advance and detach some of its troops for an expedition which was to be sent from Toulon to the relief of the threatened town ; but before this expedition had set sail Bastia had capitulated on the 24th May. This was a decisive event for Corsica. On the 18th June the National Assembly at Corte declared the island a kingdom under the rule of George III of England, and a few weeks later, on August 1st, Calvi, the last place held by the French, capitulated. And during these weeks we find Buonaparte, in conjunction with his friends the Commissaries, carrying out plans which involved the abandonment of his country to its own devices and a concentration of the forces of France towards the north. In the night of July 15 he arrived in Genoa with full powers conferred on him by Ricord. The demand that he had to put before the Senate referred to the strengthening of the coast batteries of Genoa, the reinforcing of them with French artillery, and the improvement of the roads along the coast and over the mountain passes. He had no sooner returned to Nice (we do not know with what reply from the Senate), than news arrived that the heads of both his high-placed friends, the Robespierres, had fallen in Paris under the guillotine.

This terrible blow, which shook France from one end to the other, evoked no greater emotion anywhere than in the south, which was aflame with excitement. But the friends of the dead men could not think of rising in revolt—they were too much taken up with their own personal danger, and sought for safety either in flight or in submission and disavowal of the "Tyrants." The latter alternative was adopted by Napo-

leon, from whose pen we have a letter, dated the 7th of August, which, on the face of it, can have had no other object. "I am somewhat moved," he writes, "by the fate of the younger Robespierre, whom I loved, and in whose purity of mind I believed; but had he been my father, I myself should have stabbed him had he helped to maintain tyranny." But this time-serving attitude was of no use to him. On the 6th of August the Commissaries attached to the Army of the Alps had denounced him already as a traitor to the Committee of Public Safety, and on the 10th he was placed under arrest. His papers and his sword were taken from him, and he was shut up in Fort Carré, near Antibes. He remained ten days in custody; then the Commissaries intimated to the Government that they had found nothing suspicious, and they set him free again, but only provisionally. Attached to the head-quarters of Dumerbion, he drew up a plan for an attack upon Dego which was carried out successfully on the 21st of September, and placed the French in possession of that important Apennine pass.

The two official documents which we possess, both written in very guarded terms, fail to reveal the grounds of this intrigue. It should, however, be said that the suspicion against Napoleon which was in the minds of the Commissaries as to his having relations with the enemy (there were rumours about the sum of a million francs having been sent from Genoa for the purpose of bribing a general) was without justification, and that it was only the difference of opinion alluded to above that had given rise to the feeling of mistrust. It was no less a person than Salicetti, Buonaparte's fellow-countryman and former associate,

who took the initiative in the matter. He had, it seems, taken up an attitude of opposition to Napoleon and to both the other Commissaries with the Army of Italy in regard to the attack upon Corsica; he had wished himself to accompany the ill-fated expedition in May. The others had excluded him from their councils after that, and had not arranged for him to take part in the mission to Genoa. This gave him the idea that a treacherous game was being carried on, and he was strengthened in this suspicion by the fact that on the occasion of his journey to the Army of the Alps in the beginning of August he had a narrow escape from assassination (possibly at the hands of bandits), and that Napoleon's friends, amongst them Ricord himself, took themselves off on learning of the catastrophe in Paris. Napoleon, however, remained at his post, and the fact that he dared to weather the storm seems to us the best evidence that, apart from his relations with the Robespierres, he had nothing to reproach himself with.

The incident, however, gave him a lesson which he took to heart for the future. He had forsaken for a moment, from motives of self-preservation, that maxim of his about sparing former friends, and henceforth we find him exercising greater caution in all he does. He set himself at once to carrying out instructions issued from Paris in connection with a new expedition against Corsica. It was organised on a large scale, Napoleon being put in charge of the artillery, and setting out at the beginning of March. It met with the same fate, however, as the previous one. In the first encounter with the English two ships were lost, and the others were forced speedily to make for the safety of the harbours.

Indirectly this result was evidence in favour of Napoleon's plans; it was clear that the flag of France was to triumph only on land.

Napoleon's career was now to take a new and unexpected turn. He received orders from Paris to join the Army of the West immediately, and was to take command of the artillery in the new campaign of La Vendée. This order came to him at the beginning of April in Versailles; he prepared to obey, but did not hurry over his arrangements. He did not set forth on his journey until the beginning of May, and then he proceeded first to Paris. Immediately on his arrival he was witness of a new phase in the Revolution—the outbreak of the 1st of Prairial, when the Jacobins sought to stamp out the reaction which was gathering strength, both in the capital and in the Convention. Many of Napoleon's friends took part in this ill-fated incident—among them was Salicetti, to whom Madame Permon, a Corsican lady, whose house Napoleon often visited, gave refuge, and whom, a fortnight later, she helped to escape; disguised as a servant, Salicetti accompanied Madame Permon and her daughter to Bordeaux, whence he managed to cross the frontier. Napoleon was aware of all this, but he did not seek to avenge Salicetti's denunciation of him in the previous August. He confined himself to writing a letter to Madame Permon on her departure, in which he lets them both know that he has long been in possession of their secret, and in which he contrasts his conduct with that he had experienced on the part of Salicetti: perhaps the latter might conclude that his benefactress had saved him from vengeance; it

was true that this consideration had its weight, but the mere fact that Salicetti was unarmed and banished was enough to save his head. "Look into your own mind," so ends this remarkable missive, "and above all, respect my motives: they deserve respect, for they are noble and lofty."

Throughout this crisis, so far as we can see, he held himself apart. These conflicts between the factions meant nothing to him; he was as indifferent in regard to them as he had been three years before; all that he required was a sure footing for himself. For this, however, he must remain in Paris in touch with the men who had the favours of Fortune to distribute, and at the centre of power, in which he hoped to have a share. First he used a leave of absence to absent himself from his new post; and when Aubry, the military member of the Committee of Public Welfare, an old Constitutionalist, who had but recently returned to France, struck his name off the list of generals of artillery and put him in command of an infantry brigade in La Vendée, he reported himself as sick. He lodged a protest against the slight, but did not allow this wrangle with the authorities to disturb him any more than that caused by the trouble in his native city in 1792. Never did he show himself less anxious in regard to the future. "One can live here in the utmost comfort and freedom, provided one goes straight ahead with due caution, and paying no attention to anybody but one's friends." Thus he writes to his brother Joseph, with whom he keeps in regular correspondence. He laughs at his uncle Fesch, who is already beginning to think of returning to Corsica, and who has a habit of living only in the future; the present counts as

little with him as the past, the future is everything. "Be quite at your ease in regard to the future," he says in one of these letters, "be quite content with the present, cultivate cheerfulness, and learn how to amuse yourself a little." And two days later, "I have got into a state of mind such as I have experienced on the eve of a battle—a state of mind in which one feels that if death is in our midst about to bring everything to an end with a single blow it were folly to worry oneself on that account. Everything combines to make me defiant of death and fate; and should this condition of feeling endure my friend I shall come presently to such a point that I will not step out of the way when I see a carriage rolling towards me. My reasoning faculty stands amazed at this, but the spectacle this country now presents, and one's familiarity with the game of dice which is being played by fortune, have brought me to this standpoint."

In these words Napoleon gave utterance to the universal feeling, at least amongst those who took the lead and had the power in their hands. The Revolution had not yet found anchorage in calm waters, and what the morrow might bring it was still hard to guess; but that sense of dread which had been produced by a year of terror and a long succession of desperate conflicts, was vanishing from the land. The foundations in the new State now withstood all attempts to shake them, and the numbers of its enemies at home and abroad had at least been lessened. The vanquished, moreover, could count upon toleration, if only they kept quiet, whilst those in whose hands the exercise of authority had been definitely placed were able to feel that they could use it in the interests of themselves and their friends,

without at every moment imperilling their lives. The condition of these latter illustrated curiously the power of luck, the workings of chance. They consisted of men who had mostly played quite a secondary part in the Revolution, or rogues and cowards who had been the jackals of the great tyrants, and who had probably smeared themselves with more blood than they; only to desert and betray them when the wheel of fortune had turned and their own heads were in danger. Some of these—and very poor specimens of the class, men like Barras and Fréron—were old acquaintances of Napoleon, and they showed themselves as ready as anybody to make the most of the good things that Fortune had emptied into their lap and to distribute them amongst their favourites. Their wives and their fair friends reigned in the *salons* that were thronged by the Society of the new France, striving to forget the dark past in unbridled indulgence in the *joie de vivre*. Napoleon held himself aloof at first from this mode of existence, though it had its attractions for him; he was not much in touch with such circles. He had, however, entrée to Barras's *salon* from the beginning and with him he established a close relationship. "For," as he wrote afterwards in St. Helena, "Robespierre was dead, Barras was playing a rôle of importance, and I had to attach myself to somebody and something."

To the influence of Barras may be attributed a commission which Napoleon was given in the middle of July by the Committee of Public Safety and which placed him forthwith in a central position in the field of action. This was nothing less than the making out of a plan for the prosecution of the war against the coalition.

The Peace with Prussia had been followed by the peace with Spain; it looked also as though Naples and Parma were ripe for peace; while Prussia's North German allies were beating a retreat from the scene of hostilities, and it was hoped that the other German States would now forsake the flag of Austria. As, moreover, the attempt of the English and of the emigrés by means of an expedition to northern France to overthrow the authority of the Revolution by a rising had ended in failure at Quiberon, supplies of troops were set free on all sides, and there was ground for hoping that the theatre of war might be limited now to the frontiers held against Austria and Sardinia. It was in this direction that Napoleon in the previous summer had wished to direct the most important operations, and circumstances were now combining to bring about the fulfilment of his plan. If they did not anticipate the enemy on the coast it was certain that the allies would be able to combine forces in this quarter. They had already occupied Vado, thus interrupting the French communication with Genoa. Supplies could no longer be drawn from Italian harbours, and there was difficulty in securing provisions for the army which had lately been reinforced. Therefore Buonaparte maintained it was necessary to retake Vado, cross the Apennines, and shift the theatre of war into Piedmont and Lombardy in order to make war support war. We must cut off Sardinia from Austria, he declared, in order to force it to make a separate peace, and then strike the great blow at Austria in the spring—that is, we must conquer Lombardy, become masters of Alessandria and Mantua, and pressing forwards through the passes of the Trentino simultaneously with the advance of the

Army of the Rhine into the hereditary dominions of Austria, there dictate terms of peace. Such was the plan that he put before the authorities in Paris in a succession of drafts and schemes. The year before these ideas had nearly cost him his command and his freedom ; now they were a step towards greatness. When Aubry, who had looked on him with jealous eyes, retired from the Committee on the 7th of August, and his successor, Doulcet de Pontécoulant, indicated his approval of Buonaparte's plans, fortune seemed entirely upon his side. He gave but little thought now to La Vendée ; in his letters to his brother he talks of coming to Nice ; he was counting evidently upon being employed in the campaign, the plans for which he had been making out. At the same time he was seriously engaged on a plan for entering into the Turkish service. There was question of an official mission to Sultan Selim, who was anxious to have his artillery reorganised by French military instructors, and who had approached the French Government in the matter in July. For Napoleon, whose fancy had always been captivated by the East, this was a fascinating project. He contemplated taking with him his brother Joseph, for whom he proposed to obtain a Consulate in the Levant, and he offered his services for the purpose to the Government in due form ; but the Committee did not see its way to letting him go. Doulcet and Jean Debry bestowed upon him the most glowing commendations. The former declared that he was indebted to the advice of General Buonaparte for a great part of the regulations which he had brought into use for the Army of the Alps and of Italy ; he recommended him either for the artillery or for any other branch of the army, or, if need be, for

the Diplomatic service. Debry declared that the Committee should not send away so distinguished an officer to such a distance; he proposed, in the first instance, to offer Napoleon advancement, if possible, in his own branch of the service, and only take his project into serious consideration if he should still persist in it. Accordingly the Committee sent word to the general in command in La Vendée on the 30th of August that a substitute was to be found for Brigadier General Bonaparte, as it had decided on the 4th of August to employ him in working out plans for prosecuting the war. Napoleon himself we find writing a few days later to his brother Joseph, that the Committee had declared that as long as the war lasted they could not send him out of France, that a new post would probably be found him in the artillery, and that he would probably be attached to the Committee of Public Safety. He was more contented than ever with his lot. "Come what may," he writes, "you must not be anxious about me. All the most important people of every party and every school of thought are on my side." And on the 8th of September: "Everything is looking very satisfactory as regards the future, but if it were otherwise I should simply contrive to live in the present. A man of spirit must disregard the future."

In these circumstances it arouses one's surprise to find the Committee on the 15th of September putting forth a decree to the effect that Brigadier General Bonaparte "who hitherto has been attached to the Committee of Public Safety" has been struck out of the list of generals on active service, upon the grounds "of his refusal to betake himself to the post to which he had been appointed." This step has

always been regarded as involving the removal of Napoleon from his post and as a punishment; a really serious blow to him, putting an end to all his hopes, and in truth the order is curtly worded and can have been written by no friend. There is extant however another decree, published on the same day by the Committee, to just a contrary effect. This was the leave of absence for the purpose of a journey to Constantinople, and the order to undertake the military mission to the Sultan. In this document the General's profound knowledge of the science of war, and in particular his mastery in regard to artillery, is set forth, together with particulars as to the honours he had won at Toulon and in Italy, and his being sent is represented as a proof of the friendship and regard felt by the Republic towards its esteemed ally. A complete staff of officers selected by himself, amongst them Junot and Marmont, was attached to him, the rates of pay and the grants for the mathematical and surveying instruments and the books required by the General being settled in accordance with his wishes. The same Commission which was to see to the execution of the other decree was to execute this also. The decree of removal had been signed in the first place by Cambacérès, who was later to become one of Napoleon's intimates, and on the 29th of September we find him writing with regard to the question of the young General's going to Constantinople, that there was no longer any obstacle in the way, except Buonaparte's own demand to take certain officers with him.

Bearing all this in mind, it is clear that we must put a different interpretation upon that brusquely worded decree. If Napoleon was to undertake the mission to

the East, it became necessary that his name should be removed from the list of the generals on active service; and if a pretext for this were made out of his refusal to serve in La Vendée, that may have been because there was no other to put forward, as illness could no longer be advanced as an excuse. In any case, we have nothing from Napoleon's pen to substantiate the usual view on this subject and no change is discernible in the tone of his letters to Joseph. "His journey," he writes on the 26th of September, "would have been finally ratified were it not for the rekindling of excitement in Paris and the danger of new tumults breaking out." It is to the reactionary agitation of the Parisian populace against the new Constitution which the Convention was seeking to force upon the country that Napoleon is alluding in these words. We come now to the epoch-making day when his iron will made itself felt for the first time in the centre of the State, and opened out a new phase of the rule of the Revolution.

Since the summer of 1789 the National Assembly, under its successive names of Constituent Assembly, Legislative Assembly, and Convention, had been the ruling body of France. Now for the first time it was making a serious attempt to abdicate and to separate the executive from the legislative department of the State. That is the real meaning of the Constitution of the Year III, which, after having been discussed in the Convention down to the end of August, was submitted in September to the approval of the nation. It seemed possible that this attempt might be crowned with success, for the numbers of the opponents of the Revolution had been still further reduced, and a last

effort to secure that universal peace hoped for by everyone seemed likely to achieve its object. Hated by the Royalists, this new Constitution was at the same time a harsh renunciation of those socialistic ideals towards which the democracy had steered its course under Robespierre. Not only was universal suffrage not conceded, but a fixed domicile and the payment of a tax were made conditions for the right to vote, and only men of property could become members of the Legislature. Public worship was to be made independent of the State; freedom was promised to the Press, to labour, commerce, and industry; and all the purchasers of national property were guaranteed in their possession of it. Every effort was made so to balance against each other the powers in which the national sovereignty would henceforth have its being, as to avoid the predominance of any one over the others and keep the foundations of the Constitution intact.

With this end in view, the executive power was entrusted, not to a single chief, but to a Council of Five, while the Legislature was divided into two bodies: a Council of Five Hundred composed of men of at least thirty years, and a Council of Elders, half as numerous and composed of men of over forty; to the former were allotted the duties of introducing and discussing new laws, to the latter that of discussing and actually voting them. The powers and functions of the Directory, in which the Committee of Public Safety survived, were very extensive; war and public policy, justice, administration, and finance lay in its hand; ministers, commissaries, and generals remained under its authority. But that energy which the Committee named by the Convention had brought to its decisions

was not to be reproduced by the Directory, because it had been divorced from the National Representative body without being made independent of it. It was dependent from the moment of its installation upon the wishes of the two Chambers, its members having been chosen from the Senior Chamber from lists drawn up by the Lower. It was deprived of all initiative in the matter of legislation, and it was bound by the views of the representative bodies in regard to the declaration of war and peace. The nation itself could give direct expression to its views only in the election of the two Councils, and even then only within the limits of a narrow suffrage; so that the national sovereignty, upon which the Revolution was based and which the Convention had personified, could now only develop into action through three separate organisations. It was decided that the elections should be held every four years, and in order the better to prevent the continued holding of power by those in office, and to keep them under closer control of the national will, it was provided that every year one-third of the two Chambers and one member of the Directory should retire. Take it for all in all, it was a most ingeniously thought out and logically developed system, to which nothing was lacking except the thing which was most important—a centre on which the main weight of power could rest; the tendency of the scheme was rather to avoid this point and to split up the sovereignty instead of concentrating it.

The majority were not disposed to agree to a general election. In spite of Quiberon, the unrest in La Vendée had not yet been stilled. In the south also there had been some sharp fighting, while the

reaction in Paris had been assuming dangerous proportions. The Convention decided therefore to append to the Constitution two decrees, in accordance with which two-thirds of its members were to be transferred to the new chambers, and only the remaining third had to be re-elected. On the whole, this step was well calculated. The Constitution was passed almost unanimously; for each party felt that it could turn to its own account the powers which it would place in the hands of the Government. In most of the Departments also the decrees were well received; the army, above all, was unanimous in supporting the decisions of the majority. But in Paris the reaction carried the day. Only one single section of the city declared in favour of the decrees; in all the other divisions they were rejected. And when the Convention issued orders for the partial elections, this decision was for the Parisians the signal for revolt.

Napoleon had observed with equanimity the fermentation which had been in progress in the capital since September; he was not given to attaching great importance to popular agitation, and in truth the actual powers at the disposal of the reactionaries were slight enough, but the Parisians reckoned upon the unpreparedness of the new administration, upon the indecision and lack of unity of the majority which comprised the remnants of the revolutionary parties that a year before had been at daggers drawn, upon the indifference of the masses, and above all on the predominance which belonged for the moment to the capital; for against the National Guard numbering thirty thousand, whom the sections of the capital could muster, the Convention could produce only

about five thousand men, including the Guard of the Convention, a regiment of the line which it had assigned to itself on the 1st of Prairial, and a couple of brigades taken from the neighbouring Departments. Thus it happened that when on the night of the 12th of Vendémiaire the Assembly got word of the imminent revolt, it became a prey to confusion and panic. The general in command of the Army of the Interior, Menou, had, it was true, put down the revolt of the 1st of Prairial. On that occasion the insurgents were Jacobins, and Menou had always been among their opponents; but he now seemed unequal to the occasion. In the course of a stormy night-sitting it was decided to remove him from his post, and even to put him under arrest, and to entrust the command to Barras, the chief of the Thermidorians.

Barras had served as an officer and was not lacking in resolution, at least in such situations as this, where his own head was at stake. But for the task which lay before him he required an assistant more accustomed than himself to the leadership of an army in the time of war. His choice lay (and what could be more natural?) on the general whose abilities and energy had been known to him since Toulon, and who was as much interested as himself in securing the victory of the Convention. Napoleon was thus reinstated in the position which he had filled a few weeks before; that is to say that he was attached to the executive power, which for the moment was entirely in Barras's hands, as a chief of the General Staff so to speak: he gave the orders and directions to which Barras put his name. It became all-important to bring the artillery, especially the guns parked at Le Sablon, on to the scene before the National Guard had a chance of

seizing the cannon. This was achieved. Captain Murat, who had already distinguished himself on the 1st of Prairial, was entrusted with the task of bringing the cannon from Le Sablon; this was the first occasion upon which Napoleon and he, so often to be united later in good and evil fortune, were brought together. It was on the battlefield of the 10th of August that the struggle for the supreme power in France was fought out. The Convention was holding its sittings in the Tuileries, and it was in this direction that the Parisians, just as they had done three years before, advanced to the attack on the 13th of Vendémiaire; all around the palace of the late king stood massed the troops who were to defend his assassins. The Parisian National Guard, made up in those days from the well-to-do middle classes, had refused to stand by its King, though it had artillery at its disposal, and he could or would only entrust his defence to foreign mercenaries. Now those same citizens of Paris were to be seen making the attack, and five thousand sons of their country and of the Revolution stood against them to protect the Assembly that upheld the Republic they had founded, thus asserting its own authority. But their commander was a foreigner, a Corsican emigrant who once had hated the King and the people of France, and then had learnt to despise them, and who was now saving the Republic only to overthrow it later on, and in this royal palace to set up his own imperial throne.

This was to be the last serious crisis for the Revolution, for it did not take much to dispose of its opponents in the brief struggle on the 18th and 19th of Brumaire. On the 13th of Vendémiaire,

however, the Reaction put forth its strength once again; it had never shown itself more resolute in Paris, and the thousands of well-armed citizens advancing in regular order formed a much stronger force than the unruly mob which had served to win the day for the Revolution a few years before. But in "Capitaine Canon" they found their master. When they came within range of the artillery which he had stationed at the various points of vantage, they stopped short, soon to be completely routed. Within a few hours the sanguinary work was over; a couple of hundred bodies lay strewn upon the ground; during the night the remnants of the insurrectionary mob were overpowered in the outlying quarters of the city.

"Fortune is on my side," wrote Napoleon, on the day of this event, to his brother Joseph; and in truth Fortune was lavishing her richest gifts upon the young general. On the 10th of October the Convention, at the instance of Barras, appointed him second in command of the Army of the Interior; on the 16th he was promoted to be a general of division; on the 20th, when Barras became a member of the Directory, he nominated him his successor as commander-in-chief of the Army of the Interior. The number of the troops over whom he now assumed command was not great, only about twenty thousand stationed in Paris and the surrounding Departments; but the task that lay before him gave the utmost importance to his position. He was constituted the right hand of the Directory and the Council—the safeguard of their power; and in addition to his position as commander-in-chief he came in for many other privileges not at all to be despised. How often had

he yearned to possess a house of his own, with horses and carriages, in order, as he writes somewhere, "to be able to transact his affairs more speedily"! He was now to find everything at his disposal that he could wish for—an official residence, a staff of servants, table money, carriages, as well as a complete staff of officers and officials; all doors were open to him—for had he not himself the key to many of the doors of influence? We know already what regard Buonaparte had always paid to the interests of his family. When, instead of going to La Vendée, he had remained in Paris, he had borne them in mind, for like himself they had been hard hit by the death of Robespierre. His letters to his elder brother, to his best friend as he called him, were never more tender, more pleasing, than at this period. "At the moment of sending these few words," he writes on one occasion, "I am conscious of a feeling of excitement, such as I have seldom experienced in all my life." He saw the time approaching now when he could be of use to them all. Joseph should have his consulate; Napoleon addressed a memorial on the subject to the Directory at once. For his brother Louis, whom he had placed at the military school at Châlons, he secured a commission as lieutenant and appointed him to be his own adjutant. Lucien, who had been for a time a prisoner in the summer, but whom Napoleon had already managed to set free, received a post as commissary in the Army of the North. Made happy by a good appointment, Uncle Fesch, who had hastened at once to Paris, allowed himself to forget his aspirations as a Corsican patriot. The youngest of the brothers, Jérôme, was placed by Napoleon in a college in Paris. To his mothers and sisters he

sent money, huge sums ; how he came into possession of them is unknown. So it was with all his other relatives and friends ; scarcely one of them was forgotten. It was a manifest joy to Napoleon to lavish benefits, to give proofs of his gratitude, winning for himself at the same time friends and followers ; this was one of the advantages of the power that he had won.

With Barras he remained on intimate terms. And now it was Barras again who was to give to his life a new direction and a new colour. Amongst the young and lively ladies who frequented the *salon* of the member of the Directory was Josephine, the widow of the Marquis Alexandre de Beauharnais, who had ended his life under the guillotine the year before. Like Napoleon, she was a native of an island that had come under the rule of France. Brought up under the tropical sun of Martinique, it was in the autumn of 1779 that she came to Europe to celebrate her marriage. Young as she was (though the senior of the young Corsican by six years), she had already an eventful life behind her. Her husband, for whom she had had no great affection, and who was not faithful to her, soon returned to the West Indies, of which he also was a native, leaving her to console herself in her loneliness as she well knew how. Eventually there was a complete separation ; then Beauharnais had been drawn into the whirlpool of the Revolution, which had brought him first into official life, then to the command of the Army of the Rhine, finally to the scaffold as one of the last victims of the Reign of Terror, a few days before the 9th of Thermidor. The Revolution had reunited husband and wife, and Josephine had

shared imprisonment with her husband. She was to be more fortunate in her lot, however, than the luckless Marquis. The 9th of Thermidor set her free from prison, and led her, together with her fellow-prisoner, the beautiful Cabarus (soon to be the wife of Tallien), to Barras, in whom she was to find a protector and, as there is reason to believe, something more.

Napoleon had already given thoughts to the question of marriage when in the south. Desirée Clary, the sister-in-law of his brother Joseph, who later was to become the wife of Bernadotte, and thus the ancestress of the royal family of Sweden, had for a time been the object of his affections; but he had given that idea up. After Vendémiaire, he is said to have made advances to Madame Permon, whose husband had just died, and to have been repulsed. At all events, it was not until he had assumed the command in Paris that he began to address himself to Josephine. I need not retail here all that is related in the Memoirs in regard to the development of this affair: it is dangerous ground, and even if the records were more trustworthy it would scarcely be the duty of the biographer to go over it all again. One naturally refers, in the first place, to what Napoleon himself has told us on the subject, and I am not disposed, in spite of the warnings and protests of Barras, to disregard entirely what the Emperor tells us of his first meeting with his future wife, though the story may be embellished: how he had acceded to the request of her son Eugène to be allowed to retain his father's sword when all arms had to be handed up after the crushing of the revolt; how the mother had herself come to thank him, and had then in-

vited the General to dine with her. That Barras had talked to him about Josephine, Napoleon mentions himself. It is not hard to understand the grounds upon which Barras advocated the match ; Josephine could boast of social standing equally with the old régime and with the new ; marriage with her would strengthen the General's position, enable him to live down the sobriquet of "The Corsican," and convert him completely into a Frenchman, for her house was the best in Paris, and by this time Napoleon, as he himself bore witness, wished for nothing better than to be regarded as French. Of all the insults that were hurled at him, there was none to which he had become more sensitive than this nickname. In order to secure a footing in French society there was clearly no better way than an alliance with Josephine Beauharnais. The Memoirs tell us that Napoleon had, until this period, been very careless of externals. He made his appearance in company without gloves and wearing boots that were dirty and badly made, so we learn from the wife of his early associate Junot ; with his thin yellowish face and his unkempt hair hanging in long coils over his shoulder, there was something sickly about his personal appearance : but his angular features were lit up by a pair of eyes that spoke of acuteness of intellect and power of will. It would be quite wrong to suppose from such accounts of him that the young Corsican carried himself like a trooper in the polished circles of Paris. The former cadet of the military schools of Brienne and Paris, the friend of such men as Desmazis and Marmont, the son of Carlo Buonaparte, must have compared favourably as regards bearing and culture with the very mixed society which,

freed now from the curse of the Terror, was draining the foaming cup of life and holding revel among the ruins of the old monarchy. Napoleon had had but little experience of camp life indeed; in Nice, Toulon, Marseilles, as previously in Ajaccio and his French garrisons, he had moved in the highest circles. But the gaiety and high spirits of the Parisians were unfamiliar to him; their light-hearted elegance and love of pleasure, their combination of grace and sensibility, were things incompatible with his brooding, uncommunicative, intense, strenuous nature. As a youth, when he was wont to discuss love with Desmazis, he used to glory in his opposition to his friend's frivolous indulgence in the enjoyment of the moment. Now that he had come to man's estate and face to face with the society in which the art of enjoying life was regarded as an essential, and which held out promise of the things he coveted to those who knew how to take advantage of it, he was fascinated by its brilliancy, and learned to regard his own awkwardness as a defect, causing him the more discomfiture the more anxious he became to be acknowledged as a Frenchman.

In such circumstances it was that he met this Frenchwoman of old family, who smiled on him despite his shortcomings, and who quickly gave him unmistakable proofs of her regard. He overlooked the fact that her reputation was not without blemish, that her beauty was not beyond dispute, and even that she had passed her first youth; the world in which she lived was tolerant of such failings as hers, and Josephine knew how to make up for the lost charm of girlhood by her skill in dress, grace of manner, and vivacity of speech. Clever flatterer that she was, she singled out the young soldier from all her circle for special marks

of esteem, spoke out her admiration for his military genius, and thus implanted in him just that feeling of self-confidence in his new surroundings which he had lacked. The warmth and softness of her yielding, clinging, Creole nature appealed to him strongly, from their very contrast with his own disposition. Her praise intoxicated him ; he followed her about everywhere, and the joyous, lovable widow was soon mistress of his heart.

The assertion made by Barras that it was he who provided his protégé at this same hour with the command of the Army of Italy, and that it constituted a kind of dowry for his friend Josephine, belongs to the flood of idle chatter about Napoleon that takes its rise at this period in his career—a flood of mingled truth and falsehood, of slander and misapprehension, with which it is impossible to cope. As a rule one cannot satisfy oneself wholly as to the accuracy or inaccuracy of such statements, but in this case we can bring the slanderer to book, for we have the word of Carnot, the lover of truth, to set against him. Carnot has recorded that it was he himself who nominated Napoleon to the command, and that the decision was ratified unanimously by the Directory. And indeed, if the war was to be prosecuted in Piedmont and Lombardy there could be question of no one else for the post than the general who had drawn up all the plans for the campaign, and who for nearly two years past had been pressing for their being put into execution : Scherer, the actual general in command on the frontier, having dissented from the project, and Hoche also refusing to have anything to say to it.

The matter was gone into again in January ; it was in February that the decision was come to, and it was in

the same month that the marriage was decided upon; for, as one can easily understand, Napoleon did not wish to set out on the campaign without being first united with his beloved. His appointment dates from the 2nd of March; he received his instructions on the 6th; on the 9th followed the civil marriage, at which, characteristically enough, Josephine's friends, Barras and Tallien, were witnesses, and the complaisant official took six years off the age of the bride, and added one to the age of the bridegroom. Three days later Napoleon took his seat in the carriage which was to take him back to the coast; on the 27th of March he arrived at his head-quarters at Nice.

"*Au Destin!*"—such was the motto that Napoleon had engraved on Josephine's wedding ring. This did not imply a blind trust in Fate; it pointed rather to a resolute prosecution of his aim in defiance of the buffets of fortune and the dangers of death, but with acquiescence in the inevitable. He could not tell and did not ask whither "the wild steed of life" might be carrying him. "That man will not get far," he once said later, "who knows his destination from the start." But he had found the right field for his efforts, the background for his solution of the riddle of life: that revolutionary France which he had saved, and which he was now leading to new victories. The honour and renown, the power and greatness of this land had now become his goal. Henceforth his destiny was entwined with that of France.

Hitherto Napoleon had kept to the Italian form of his surname, Buonaparte. It is to be found thus written in his signature to orders as commander-in-chief of the Army of the Interior. Now, at the outset of his Italian campaign, in his first despatch to the

Directory announcing that he has reached the army, and taken over the command, he alters the form of the name that is so soon to resound throughout the whole world. It was his desire to tread the soil of Italy as a Frenchman, now that he was setting forth to conquer it for France.

To make war support war was the object that he placed before the Army of Italy and that he now strove to achieve. The condition in which he found his troops necessitated this decision. They numbered about 40,000 men, most of them from the Alps and Southern Provinces, collected together out of old regiments of the monarchy and from the volunteer corps of the Revolution, hardened veterans, but in an indescribable state of neglect and destitution, ill-disciplined and ill-conditioned. The officers also were drawn in part from the old army, members of the ancient nobility, ex-students of the military academy such as Serrurier and Berthier, Marmont and Dommartin ; while others, such as Augereau and Masséna, were products of the Revolution, men who not long before themselves had knapsacks on their backs. They all eyed with disfavour the young general, "the protégé of Barras and his women," who until a year ago had been in a position subordinate to so many of them. But now that he was in the midst of them asking shrewd questions as to the dispositions of the army, as to the strength and spirit of each of its units, and then gave out his commands with not a word too many or too few, displaying an absolute knowledge of the ground and all its conditions, they bowed before the power of this strong will and masterful intelligence.

The army was stationed along the Riviera, facing northwards between Voltri and Albenga. Three roads led over the Genoese Apennines, one by the Col di Tenda, one over the Altare Pass, and one through the Bocchetta. The central road, which Bonaparte chose, sent two arms out into the mountain, one by Dego and Acqui towards Alessandria and Milan, the other by Millesimo and Ceva towards Turin. Here, between the Austrian and Sardinian positions, Napoleon determined to make his advance in order to strike at his enemies separately. The Austrians, startled by a French move in the direction of Genoa, which had not been ordered by Napoleon, were the first to attack. On the 10th and 11th of April they forced back, under the leadership of Argenteau, La Harpe's advanced division stationed near Voltri. But their advance was checked by the entrenchments on Monte Legino, and on the 12th they were surprised by superior numbers at Montenotte, surrounded, and dispersed. Napoleon gave his enemies no rest. On the 13th a Sardinian corps was defeated at Millesimo, and on the 14th the rest of the army was placed *hors de combat.* On the same day the *coup de grâce* was given to Argenteau at Dego, and the commander-in-chief of the Austrian forces, Beaulieu, who had under him at most 20,000 men, saw himself cut off from his allies by Bonaparte. There was nothing for him to do but to retreat into Lombardy. Napoleon let him go in order to devote himself to the Sardinians; falling upon them at once in crushing force, he defeated them, first at Ceva, then on the 22nd of April at Mondovi.

The first stage had been completed. Far and wide the French columns spread out over the rich plains of

Piedmont. King Victor Amadeus now remained in possession only of his fortresses. The Austrians were far away, and his army had been destroyed. He had no alternative but to submit. He appealed to the victor for a truce. Napoleon acceded to his request on condition of his surrendering three fortresses and opening the passages through the Alps to the French. In so doing he went beyond his powers, for the Directory had not given him authority to enter into such negotiations; but his decision was dictated by necessity. Hesitation and delay would have been an advantage to the enemy, and "time was everything," as Napoleon himself had declared two years before in regard to this very advance which he was now carrying into execution. He made his excuses to the Directory through his brother Joseph, whom he sent back to Paris for this purpose; and granted peace with the King. He put the French Government in possession of all the facts of the case: "Have confidence in me," he wrote, "and Italy is yours."

Thus freed from danger in the rear, he proceeds with his advance against Beaulieu. While the latter makes good his retreat to the north of the Po and across the Ticino, Napoleon, instead of crossing the river at once, as he made the enemy think was his intention, keeps to the south and crosses it in the face of slight resistance at Piacenza, with the result of forcing the enemy to abandon Milan and to continue his flight beyond the Adda. Then comes the victory of Lodi, the day which, as Napoleon has said himself, first evoked in him the consciousness that he had won for himself a place in history and was destined to great things. And for his own and later times it

presented that ineffaceable picture of him in the midst of his generals and adjutants storming the bridge like a veritable god of war, heedless of death and fate, leading on his troops to victory.

It was at this moment of his conquering march on Milan, whose gates lay wide open to his coming, and where triumphal arches were being erected to welcome the liberator of Italy, that he received from Paris instructions to hand over the command in Lombardy to Kellerman, and himself with a part of his army to set out for the south, and undertake raids against the other Italian States, including Rome and Naples. We have seen how already, in the summer of 1794, Napoleon had set his face against the idea of advancing into the Italian peninsula, and how he had directed all his plan towards an advance through the Alps, so as to make a blow at the very heart of Austria. On the day after the battle of Lodi he had indicated this aim to the Directory. Their decision meant therefore that he was to resign the theatre of war in which the big things must happen into the hands of the hero of Valmy, whose fame still outshone his own, but who had not much experience of fighting in the Alps. He was perfectly ready to carry out the raids which the Directory called on him to undertake, but these looting expeditions, as they might be called, were trivial matters that could have been effected by flying columns and mere negotiations—indeed, he might have levied contributions without fighting, as the result of the prestige of what he had accomplished, the terror that went before him. But what was intolerable to his pride was the thought that he must share power with another. He came to an instant decision on the subject. In two letters, one of which was addressed to the

Directory as a whole, the other significantly enough to Carnot instead of to Barras, he expressed his feelings. He recognised but two alternatives: either he must retain full command, or he must resign.

These letters are very striking productions, alike from the resolute spirit breathing through them, and their weighty and impressive form. The General recognised that he owed everything to the Republic, even the sacrifice of his own convictions; and he declared his belief that Kellerman could lead the army as well as he. "For no one is more assured than I am," he declared, "that our victories have been due to the courage and the keenness of the army itself." It would not be for him to complain if the command were to be given to another; it would but double his anxiety to earn the approval of the Directory in whatever post they might entrust to him. But he made it clear that it was essential that the sole command should remain in the hands of one man. "I believe," he says, "that one bad general is better than two good ones. The art of war, like the art of government itself, is a matter of careful handling (*une affaire de tacte*) . . . I cannot allow myself to have my feet entangled. I have begun with some success, and I wish to continue to show myself worthy of your esteem." The Directory was inclined not to take these words seriously, but to regard them as a mere ebullition of injured pride; Napoleon could not imagine that the chief command would be taken from him, and his letters were the outcome of mere pique. But this interpretation did him an injustice. "Unity of command is essential to success," he had already declared in his memorial to Robespierre. "The Government must put complete trust in its general and must give

him a free hand, if they wish him to attain the object at which it aims"; thus had he written in a letter in January at the time when there was still talk of appointing Scherer as leader of the expedition. All his plans had been based upon this essential unity, upon which he insisted in his despatch to the Directory. This had been the idea that he had sought to expound in the *Souper de Beaucaire*—this had been the ruling feature of every battle, every operation, every command, for which he had been responsible: this had been the foundation of all his successes, the essence of all his plans, the sum of all his achievements. One need not argue whether the conviction that he himself was the man to be entrusted with the work should perhaps be described as ambition. It was the consciousness of his own power, his clear grasp of the end set before him, and arising from this, the passionate desire to attain it. It was the "*Vaincre ou mourir*" that he had sent to the Directory as his motto at the beginning of the campaign, and that led him on to the bridge of Lodi. Therefore we need not discuss whether Napoleon really believed that the Directors would not dare to displace him. So Bismarck in his later years can hardly have believed that his old master would ever accept his repeated offers of resignation; and yet one may rightly deem it a superficial view to suppose that the founder of the German Empire was merely playing upon his Emperor, and had not made up his mind to carry his policy through or to go. But Napoleon had not only the power in his hands—that might indeed have been taken from him; but he had right on his side. As has been aptly remarked, he judged the situation precisely as history judged it later on, and his judgment was justified by

his subsequent successes. And we can well believe that men like Carnot were at least as much influenced by this insight of his, as by the fear of raising enemies against the Government and making the army itself hostile, if the General were overthrown. It is enough that he and his colleagues yielded the point. "The Directory," he wrote in reply to the determined soldier, "has seriously considered your communication, and its trust in your talents and in your zeal for the Republic has led it to decide the question in the affirmative. The commander-in-chief, General Kellerman, will remain at Chambery."

Henceforth Napoleon had full power for his own designs. More than once again before the Peace of Campo Formio he either offered or threatened to resign, always insisting on the alternative that either he would have everything under his control, or would withdraw into "the mass of the citizens." And the Government never made more than a trifling show of opposition, and always ended with flattering requests that he would remain, and by conferring the fullest powers upon him.

A fresh victory of Borghetto on the 30th of May gave the French possession of the line of the Mincio, and forced Beaulieu to take refuge behind the mountain walls of the Trentino. Henceforth, except the garrison of Mantua, which was immediately besieged, there was none of the Imperialist army south of the Alps.

Italy had been abandoned to Napoleon. Already on the 9th of May he had compelled Parma to agree to an armistice. After his entry into Milan he induced Modena to open negotiations, whilst at Paris the envoys of King Victor Amadeus were granted by

the Directory the peace that had been dictated by Napoleon's victories. That the Austrians during their retirement had occupied Peschiera, the Venetian fortress on the Lake of Garda, gave Napoleon a welcome pretext for bending the Government of Venice to his will. It was compelled to evacuate Verona, the fortress that watched the line of the Adige, and henceforth there hung over this decrepit republic the dark thunder-cloud from which soon the destroying bolt would flash down upon it. On the 5th of June the envoys of Naples yielded before the threat of a French invasion. The conditions on which they obtained an armistice for their Court were expulsion of the émigrés, the closing of their harbours against the English, the recall of their troops from the Austrian army, and of their ships from the English fleet. On the 8th of June Napoleon entered Bologna. The Legations were occupied, and the "Transpadane Republic," the first of the ephemeral states of Napoleonic Italy, was proclaimed. All the world now expected a march upon Rome. The Directory wished it, and Napoleon himself threatened the Spanish ambassador with it, when he came to his head-quarters as a mediator (for Spain was now allied with France). But on the 23rd of June he conceded the Monsignori what they had hardly expected, an arrangement for averting the invasion by paying a ransom. Eight days later he was in Florence (the city from which his family originally came), as the unwelcome guest of the brother of the Emperor with whom he was at war, while one of his divisions made a raid upon Leghorn, and lightened the warehouses of its English merchants of some hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of property.

For above all else, the one object and condition of these campaigns and negotiations was to secure booty. It was the oft-repeated command of the Directory. It was the wish and thought with which Napoleon himself had trodden the soil of Italy. Already war was not only supporting war, but it was supporting the French Republic also. Thus the first of the treaties he had concluded—that with Parma—put at his disposal, besides a contribution of two millions of francs, 1200 horses, with their harness, 2000 oxen, and 10,000 bushels of corn; and besides, the Duke had to hand over twenty paintings from his gallery. And so it went on. Gold and corn, oxen and works of art, paintings by the great masters of the Renaissance, and ancient statues, Etruscan vases, priceless manuscripts, made up the ransoms with which the Italian governments had to purchase their safety. "Send out of Italy everything that can be moved and that can in any way be useful to us," so ran the instructions of the Government. Napoleon was not the inventor of this system of looting. Already, after the conquest of Belgium and Holland, they had taken away with them valuable Rubens and Van Dycks. Such conquests were considered as contributing to the glory of the Republic. It congratulated itself on being thus able to adorn the land of liberty and its capital with the monuments of the art and culture of the vanquished, as old Rome had been filled with the works of the great artists of Greece. But hitherto no one had understood how to apply the principles of modern France so systematically and with such results for himself as Bonaparte. The more of such treasures he secured, the stronger would be his own position, and this because he not only won the Govern-

ment to his side, but also the hearts of Frenchmen, for whom the war, that had long been an intolerable burden, was now being made a source of wealth and glory. And the Italians themselves seemed hardly to take ill this conduct of the conqueror. The educated classes indeed saw in him a liberator from the oppression of their reactionary governments.

The idea of nationality which had taken form in France, and which he brought forward in his speeches and proclamations, inflamed their hearts, and made progress in Italy too through his victories. And if amongst the lower orders, and especially among the peasantry, hatred against the foreigners spread more and more, and here and there (as, for instance, in Parma and Venetia) led to wild outbreaks, this chiefly gave expression to the rage excited by the excesses of the French soldiery, and resulted from their priests rousing them against these plundering enemies of the Church. Napoleon himself, in consequence of these troubles, turned his attention to removing the causes of complaint. Although he was squeezing the governments, and thus at the same time laying heavy burdens upon their people, he tried to keep his army under better discipline. He kept the promise he had made to his hungry and ragged army at the beginning of the campaign, that he would lead them into some of the richest regions in the world; but he also kept his other promise, that any excesses would be punished. He could turn a blind eye to the proceedings of the officers, especially those of high rank and of the Commissaries whom the Government had sent him; but against the marauders he proceeded without any leniency. "I shall maintain order," he had already written to the

Directory from Piedmont, "or I will resign the command of these brigands. I have adopted all means to restore discipline. Victory will do the rest." But above all he sought to secure respect for the religious feelings of the vanquished, and in this he showed a wide divergence from the views of the Directory. The first execution of marauders that he ordered was for the plundering of a church. When Archbishop Visconti of Milan, a venerable prelate of eighty years, welcomed him at the head of the clergy on his entry into the city, he dismounted from his horse. "The Republic," he said in reply to the addresses of this prince of the Church and of the other deputations, "desires that each shall contribute to the welfare of all; that each shall enjoy his rights and make unselfish use of them. Each will be free to express his faith in God and follow the religion that his conscience dictates. Each will enjoy the possession of his property."

The Directory bade him lay hands on the famous treasury of the *Casa santa* of Our Lady of Loretto, which had been accumulating wealth for fifteen hundred years, and to go to Rome and overthrow the "fanatical priests." But Napoleon did not touch the sanctuary of Loretto and did not go to Rome. He only used the orders of his Government to squeeze the Roman envoys and screw a larger ransom out of them. The Directory thought first of getting millions out of Italy; but Napoleon looked further, and thought of obtaining power and influence. The closing of the harbours against England, the occupation of the fortified seaports, especially of Ancona, were for him more important than any treasures. He did everything with method and system. He organ-

ised robbery itself; but he made the subjection, not the destruction, of his antagonists his object. The Directors were merely the men of Thermidor, who had overthrown Robespierre the organiser of the Terror. They were the successors of Hébert and Danton, through whose insubordination they had climbed to power. But Napoleon, on the other hand, was, even in his policy towards the Church, the heir of the tribune, and of his brother, who, as Commissary of the Republic, had already made the toleration of the old religion in the conquered territories a law for the Army of Italy. He was, as was wittily said of his appearance on the 18th of Brumaire, "a Robespierre on horseback." And this, too, in the fact that when the need arose he knew how to employ terror. It was at Binasco that he first acted with the severity that made his name so feared. "Here," he wrote to the Commissary, "you must burn and shoot freely, so that terror may be spread, and a striking example made." He spared as far as he could, that is to say, so long as he was obeyed; but he hurled to earth without mercy whatever opposed the system he set up. "The French army," he said in his proclamation to the Lombards, "which is as magnanimous as it is strong, will treat with paternal kindness those who are peaceful and orderly; but it will be terrible as the fire of heaven to the rebels, and to the villages that afford a refuge to them." Each one might live, work, and worship God as he pleased, provided only he would obey. We have seen the same idea already in the *Discours de Lyon*. There he had imagined a lot such as this for the working classes, but would allow to the leaders among a people freedom, and the living of their lives in their own way according to the measure

of their social influence and their powers of mind. But fate willed it that the wider his power extended, the smaller became the circle of those who could thus live free, and that at last no one was to be master of his own will, except himself. He believed in his system, for where would he have been if this belief too had been shaken? And all his experiences in Corsica, in France, and on the 13th of Vendémiaire, had only made him feel all the more that the masses, left to themselves, were weak, and never by themselves capable of spontaneous action, and that only organised strength signified anything in the world. In Italy, too, his experiences had the same result. In his speeches and proclamations he made free use of such high-sounding words as, Freedom, the Nation, the Memory of the Glories of Italy of old, and the great deeds of their ancestors; but for himself all this was mere empty sound. It was not on the love of the peoples for freedom and equality that he reposed his confidence. "These," he wrote to the Directory in the days of Campo Formio, "have been of little or no assistance to me. But good discipline, respect for the people's religion, carried even to flattery with the priests, fair dealing, and above all great activity and swift punishment of the evil-minded, these have been what have really helped the Army of Italy. All one has to say in proclamations and printed discourses is mere romance. Intelligence, discretion, skill, are needed for great ends. And nothing else is wanted." He was full of profound contempt for the people whom he called to freedom.

But if he had been defeated the Spanish ambassador at Rome would have been fully justified in his prophecy that in that case not one Frenchman from the

Italian peninsula would ever have seen his native country again; for the exasperation of the people against the plundering, godless foreigners had spread widely and deeply. But victory had brought security to Napoleon, and seemed to fully justify his calculations. He had still long to wait until he saw the error in his reckoning.

Though at Verona he had its gateway in his hand and the road open, he had to change his mind as to his plan of pushing forward through the Tyrol, because at the end of May the armies of Jourdan and Moreau, that were to join him there from the Rhine, had hardly moved from their standing camps. Moreover, he soon found himself in the position of having to defend the ground he had won. On the 26th of June Count Wurmser, an old experienced warrior, who had commanded on the Rhine, had marched up to Innsbruck with 25,000 fresh troops, and there formed a junction with the remnant of Beaulieu's army. At the end of the month the Austrians, divided in two columns, came pouring down the valleys of the Adige and Chiese. There was a moment when Napoleon himself thought the game was lost—at least, he thought of retreat in order to get out of the entanglement that threatened him. Verona had already been abandoned, and the Austrians were out of the mountains. Augereau's spirit of reckless daring at last put an end to his chief's hesitation and persuaded him to hold on; and then the mistakes of the Austrians, and above all Wurmser's delay in crossing the Mincio at the right time and at the right points, gave Napoleon time to concentrate his troops after raising the blockade of Mantua, and then to take full advantage of his position on interior lines. On the 3rd

of August the right Austrian column, on the 3rd and 5th the left in the battle of Castiglione, were stopped, beaten, and driven back into the Alps.

Mantua, again besieged, was still a thorn in the side of the French, and the Austrian general made another attempt to succour the fortress, this time by the Brenta Valley, at the same time guarding the upper valley of the Adige with a detached force under one of his generals, Davidovitch, so as to protect the Tyrol. But Napoleon now threw a superior force against Davidovitch. Step by step the Austrians were driven northward along the Adige valley; the barrier they tried to maintain at Trent, where the upper valleys of the Adige and the Brenta lie close together, was broken through; and as a result of this success Wurmser himself was threatened with disaster. Thrice, four times, assailed by the French coming down along the Brenta on his rear, he saw his army broken up bit by bit. Two thousand Austrians extricated themselves by the side valleys; the rest under their commander-in-chief were driven down upon Mantua, and had to take refuge in the fortress that they had hoped to relieve.

The roads northward into Austria by the upper Adige and the Brenner Pass were now for the second time open to the victor. But during the very days in which he was carrying out this campaign, which will always be a marvel to the student of strategy, the fortune of war had turned to the side of the Austrians north of the Alps. On the 3rd of September Jourdan, who was already in retreat, was decisively defeated at Wurtzburg by the Archduke Charles, and thereby Moreau, who had already advanced across the Lech, was also forced to retire. The defeat with which fate

seemed to threaten the French in Italy, thus fell upon their brethren in Germany. In hurried retreat and in complete disorder, these reached the Rhine, and could not feel safe till they were behind the great river.

And so once more the whole burden of the war fell upon Italy and on Napoleon's shoulders. This time the enemy, who gave him only a few weeks' rest, made the main attack from the eastwards, from Friuli. And once more a moment came for the French when all seemed to be lost. It was on the 15th of November, in front of the bridge of Arcola, when Napoleon had concentrated all his strength on one spot, and was trying by means of a bold frontal attack like that of the bridge of Lodi, to force the line of the little river Alpone, behind whose marshy banks the Austrians lay. With the colours in his hand he was himself trying to bring the troops on to the attack along a narrow embankment between the swampy rice-fields. Torn by the deadly fire of the Croats lying down behind the river dykes, the column was thrown into confusion. An aide-de-camp was killed at his side. Others of the officers around him were wounded. He himself stumbled and slid down the bank. With difficulty his comrades, Marmont and his own brother Louis, saved him and extricated him from the tumult. The column rallied and the bridge was stormed, though already a flank column of the Austrians, issuing from the Tyrol, had after some victorious engagements advanced close up to Verona. But Napoleon never wavered from his plan of using to its full extent the superiority of force that concentration on one point gave him. Leaving the enemy he had driven back from Arcola, he swung round to the north of Verona, and on the 17th of

November, fell on the front and flank of the column from the Tyrol and drove it northwards. Both of the Austrian armies were now in full retreat.

Yet once more, for the fourth time, and again from the Tyrol, the Austrians tried to relieve the fortress on the ramparts of which the banner of Austria still flew. On the 15th of January (1797), the attempt ended in disaster on the ice-covered plateau of Rivoli, bravely though the Austrian regiments charged at the French batteries on that winter morning. On the 3rd of February, the French made their entry into Mantua.

The indefatigable conqueror used the short respite now given him by his persistent opponents, to completely clear the ground in his rear. The rulers of Rome had misinterpreted the forbearing attitude adopted by Napoleon in the spring. When the Austrians advanced to the relief of Mantua in November, they once more took a hostile attitude, withheld the money they had agreed to pay, and began to prepare to defend themselves. Napoleon decided to call them to account. On the 1st of February, he issued a declaration of war from Bologna, at the same time promising, nevertheless, that there should be no interference with religious matters. He declared his hostility against the Government of Rome, not against its subjects, against the temporal, not the spiritual power of the Pope. On the 3rd of February, there was an engagement on the Senio. Monks with crucifix or sacred picture in hand were to be seen hurrying through the ranks of the 6000 soldiers and armed peasants that had been put in the field by the Papal Government, calling on them to fight against these children of the devil. But as soon as the firing began there was a general rout. A few fell,

hundreds were made prisoners, thousands ran away. Two days later Napoleon was at Ancona, the finest harbour on the Adriatic, the only one besides Venice, as he wrote to the Directory: "It is invaluable for our relations with Constantinople," he said. "In twenty-four hours from here one can be in Macedonia." "We must," he added a few days later, "hold Ancona till there is a general peace, and it must always remain French. This will give us great influence with the Ottoman Porte, and make us masters of the Adriatic Sea, as Marseilles and the island of Corsica will give us command of the Mediterranean." On the 19th, when he was again on the move and had reached Tolentino, three days' march from Rome, he dictated peace to the trembling envoys of the Curia. The main conditions which he laid down and carried through were the closing of the ports against the English, the cession to France of Avignon, the Venaissin territory, and the Legation of Bologna, the occupation of Ancona until there was a general peace, and further contributions to be levied on the wealth of churches, monasteries and treasuries. But he forbore making an entry into the Holy City, and thus saved it from the sack for which the Jacobins and all the rabble of Rome were longing, and which would have doubtless followed if the Pope had been forced to take refuge in flight from the conqueror. Half as if he were excusing himself, he wrote to the Directory that an additional contribution of thirty million francs was ten times better worth getting than Rome, where he did not expect he would have found more than five millions, as nearly everything had already been sent away to Terracina. "This old machine will go to pieces of itself," he

added. But he sent his aides-de-camp to the Pope to assure him of his personal respect, of which he wished to give him proof at every opportunity; as he had already sent word to him in October, that his ambition was to have the name of the preserver far rather than of the destroyer of the Holy See. He actually had in his hands a letter from the Directory, in which they indicated to him as his mission that he was to extirpate the Roman religion, extinguish the torch of fanaticism in Italy, and destroy the centre of Roman unity; but they had nervously added that this was not an order, but only an expression of their wishes, and that whatever the General might decide, they would see in it a proof of his desire to serve the interests of France. This was Napoleon's answer to their letter, and he did not hesitate to inform them of his own policy which was so directly opposed to theirs. "I have said nothing of religion," he wrote, "for it is clear that by means of argument and by giving them something to hope for, these people can be persuaded to take more than one step that will really be of advantage for the internal peace of our country." It was the policy of the Concordat for which he thus declared.

And now he was to strike the decisive blow against Austria. Not by the Brenner Pass, and not by co-operation with the Army of the Rhine as he had first planned it, but he was to carry it out with his own army alone, and by the long Alpine roads through Friuli, Carinthia, and Styria. In the district of Friuli, the enemy were waiting for him, and had concentrated their forces under their one victorious leader, the Archduke Charles. In a few days the triple barriers presented by the river lines of the

Piave, the Tagliamento, and the Isonzo had been forced by the French, and Charles had been compelled to retire northwards, while a second French army advancing through the Tyrolese Alps by the Pusterthal valley was steadily pushing forward against the Austrian line of retreat. In vain in a series of sanguinary encounters, from the 19th to the 22nd of March, the archduke tried to beat off Masséna, who here did splendid service. He had the utmost difficulty in extricating himself. The greater part of his troops were lost, many of them prisoners; he had only 13,000 of them left with him, and the campaign was practically decided against the Austrians within ten days after it began.

The archduke had abandoned Klagenfurt and retired into the valleys of Styria, still pursued with the same energy by Masséna, when on the 30th of March Napoleon entered the capital of Carinthia, and made a short halt there. He employed the time in writing to the archduke a very "philosophical" letter, to use his own description of it, in which, after summing up the military situation, he offered him nothing less than peace. There had been enough men killed, he argued, enough misery inflicted on the world. They might perhaps kill a few thousand more, but then after all they must come to an understanding, "for everything has its limits, even the passion of hate." Were they going to embarrass themselves any longer with the interests of England? "You, General, you who by your birth stand so near a throne, and are placed so high above all small ambitions, will you earn the fame of a benefactor of humanity, a saviour of Germany? As far as I am concerned," he says in conclusion (and we imagine we are hearing some

phrase from the *Discours de Lyon*), "if these overtures of mine are the means of saving the life of one single man, I would be prouder of the civic crown so earned than of the sad glories of success in war." Words like these, though so different from the style of diplomatic negotiations, were nevertheless singularly well chosen for the occasion. They harmonised with the pacific feeling that already prevailed at the Austrian head-quarters, and were calculated to discredit the warlike policy that the minister still in power at Vienna, Baron von Thugut, was advocating. It has been argued indeed that Napoleon may have been led to take this changed tone through some apprehension as to whether his force that had been pushed too far to the front could overcome the resistance of the Austrians. And indeed, he was not without cause for anxiety. For the Army of the Rhine was still tied to that river, and he could hardly think of forcing his way through to Vienna with his army, weakened as it was by its losses in battle and the detachments he had to leave behind ; while there was danger of the levy *en masse* being called out in the Tyrol, Austria, and Hungary, and he had just received news of a popular rising in his rear in Venetia. In his letters to his Government Napoleon had several times dwelt upon these considerations. On the other hand, his line of communications with Italy was quite safe ; in any case he could with very little difficulty suppress the Venetian rising, and we know that he was not the man to have much fear of mere undisciplined levies. In his letters to his immediate chief, the Minister of War, he said nothing of such anxieties, but only that he wanted to have 20,000 more men and the co-operation of the Army

of the Rhine. We may therefore venture to say that the letter to the archduke really expressed the political ideas by which Napoleon was then influenced; he wanted peace.

He had indicated it in the summer of 1794 as the object of the campaign against Austria. Now on the first opportunity that offered he tried to secure it. He already stood where he had wished to conclude it, in the heart of the enemy's territories. And without troubling about his line of retreat, he did not hesitate a moment to push his columns still farther forward. On the 7th of April Masséna had reached Leoben. On the 13th Napoleon himself was with these advanced troops, and there, at the château of Göss, 73½ miles from Vienna, he received the plenipotentaries sent to him by the Austrian Government in response to his communication.

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So far Napoleon had compelled only small states to make peace. If now the great power which had begun the war against the Revolution, and had put forth the greatest efforts to carry it to a successful issue, was to lay down its arms, the result must be a general peace, at least so far as the Continent was concerned. In this Napoleon was meeting the desire of the whole nation, and felt that he was also in accord with the army, though not with the Directory, with whom the aggressive tendencies of the Revolution still prevailed. They flattered themselves still with delusive hopes of bringing Prussia into the war against Austria, winning the whole course of the Rhine as the frontier of France, and revolutionising the empire, as well as Italy. In direct opposition to this policy, which could only reunite the enemies of

France and perpetuate the war, the preliminaries of peace, negotiated at Leoben, followed what one can only call a policy of moderation. Napoleon wanted, not to strengthen the coalition, but to break it up, to bind Austria to the interest of France, and thus place the latter in a position that would enable her at her choice to act with either of the two Powers that were predominant in Germany. It would thus be easy for her to have a voice in the affairs of the German Empire. "If," he wrote in May, "this *corps Germanique* did not exist already, it would have to be created expressly in our interests."

As in his strategical combinations, so also in his diplomacy he sought to gain possession of interior lines. What his sword had won, he wished to dominate. He insisted on Austria's giving up the Duchy of Milan, and also on the entry of Modena into the new state to which after these further annexations he gave the name of the "Cisalpine Republic." In the north he demanded the cession by Austria of Belgium, which she had long lost and practically abandoned; and further the "Constitutional Frontier" for France, which the Convention, shortly before its dissolution, had solemnly decreed as the boundary of the Republic on the 1st of October, 1795. This was not the line of the Rhine; for neither Holland nor Cologne were included in it, but it took in Luxemburg and Limburg, and the regions along the Rhine which the victories of the summer of 1794 had won for France. The integrity of the Empire was expressly safeguarded in the negotiations, and on the other side there was to be compensation for France within the frontiers thus laid down, and as they were fixed by the decree of the Convention. Thus in the north also Napoleon kept

to the basis of what the sword had won. It was not his fault that the arms of France had not been more successful in this direction. He had in his hands the means of bringing Austria to these arrangements, and also, as he hoped, into close union with France. The decrepit old Republic of Venice, which after years of ill-guarded neutrality was already in the agonies of death, had long been a coveted object of Austrian ambition. But Napoleon did not mean to let out of his hands the predominant position in Italy, and had no intention of transferring to the Austrians, Adria, the immediately adjoining territory of the old Republic. He offered them the City of the Lagoons, and as being land immediately in front of the Alpine provinces, a portion of the continental possessions of the Republic forming the northern corner of Adria. Outside this, north and south of the Apennines, France was to be the dominant power in Italy. It was the policy of the Empire of a few years later, the fundamental lines of which were already coming into sight. On this basis the preliminaries of peace were concluded on the 18th of April, and Napoleon led his troops back to despoil the unfortunate Government of the Lagoons, which the vanquished were now ready to accept as a gift at his hands.

The Directory was angry, but could not think of making any opposition. For Napoleon had the power in his hands; nor did this consist merely of his army, which after all was only a portion of the forces of the Republic; nor of his position as the master of Italy, the devotion of his soldiers, the renown he had won by his victories, the reckless determination of his iron will—it was above all the power derived from his policy, which was in accord with the

will of the nation, and on which he had staked his own and his soldiers' fortunes. This gave him an unlimited advantage over the Directory, and forced it to follow his lead. And this all the more because at the moment the Government was seriously embarrassed by home politics. In April, during the peace negotiations, the elections had been held for the renewal of a third of the representatives of the nation. On the 20th of May the newly elected members took their seats, and gave a complete majority to the opposition, which had been already strengthened during the winter. At the same time the retiring Director, the Radical Le Tourneur, was replaced by a member of the opposition, M. de Barthélemy being elected. He had been the negotiator of the treaty with Prussia and Spain at Basel, in 1795. Carnot had already been making a change of front, and in the course of the summer had become more inclined to a moderate attitude, so that divisions thus found their way into the Directory also, and increased the influence exercised on the Government by the opposition majority in the Chambers. This majority had not exactly become Royalist. It was made up of the most diverse elements, and its unity arose essentially from the feeling against the Jacobin policy which the majority of the Directors, Barras, Reubell, and La Reveillière (the Triumvirs, as their opponents called them), followed in both internal and external affairs. The programme of the opposition was the re-establishment of the prosperity of those interests that the policy of the Triumvirs endangered, industry, agriculture and trade; the amicable settlement of Church questions; and above all the restoration of peace. The danger arose from the fact that these

objects coincided with the programme of the Royalists, whose hopes thus received a new encouragement, and who were thus again brought to the front. The old Jacobin general, Pichegru, the conqueror of Holland, who had led the armies of the Revolution to victory in 1793 and 1795, had already been won over to them; for two years he had been in relations with the exiled court of Louis XVIII. When he was chosen President of the Five Hundred, the Chambers were drifting into a course that threatened to lead to the breaking up of the Constitution. They had hardly assembled when the opposition began its attack. They demanded that there should be an investigation into the squandering of public money and alleged peculation, that the finances should be put on a sound basis, and the burden of taxation lightened. They passed decrees that would facilitate the return of the émigrés, and assured some toleration for the Catholic religion; and above all they demanded peace and some moderation in the reckless conduct of foreign affairs.

And here they not only set themselves in opposition to the tendencies of the Directory, but they also demanded a revision of the policy which Napoleon had adopted with regard to Venice. He had dealt with the City of the Doges as the partitioning Powers had formerly dealt with the Poles. First he had fostered the spirit of disorder, then when the fruit of it ripened, and the country folk rose against the foreign intruders, and the demagogues in the towns, and massacred some hundreds of them, he had demanded vengeance of the timid, helpless Government—all with the predetermined plan of thus obtaining a pretext for destroying the unfortunate Republic,

and having in his possession what he meant to give to Austria. He had just occupied Venice itself, fresh disturbances having given him a new opportunity for action; he had displaced the Government and put the democracy in power there; this again in view of having a fresh security in hand for his further dealings with Austria. His head-quarters were at this time at the castle of Monbello, near Milan, where he held his court like a Proconsul in princely state. Around him were his staff-officers and generals, the comrades of his fame; Berthier, who had been at his side as his chief-of-the-staff, since the victory of Montenotte, Lannes, and Murat, Marmont, Augereau, and Leclerc, to whom he had just given the hand of his sister Pauline. Josephine, too, had come, and for a while Lætitia, who now saw her daughter-in-law for the first time, and her sons and daughters were there also. Then there was the crowd of officials and delegates, foreign envoys, suitors, flatterers, and those who were drawn by mere curiosity, but all at the beck of the one man. As absolute as only a Cæsar could be, Napoleon ruled over the conquered land, levied contributions and taxes, organised the states that he had pieced together out of the fragments of the older Italy, gave to one, took from another, and was in it all himself, the bringer of order and peace, the Master.

It was here that he heard of what the legislature had dared to say, the resolutions it had ventured to adopt against his policy, not without at the same time due praise for his exploits. Whatever may have been his attitude towards the Triumvirs, these proceedings brought him back to their side, made him their ally. They at once overlooked his arbitrary action, and left entirely to him the carrying through of the negotia-

tions with Austria; he in return entered the lists against their opponents with all the weight of his influence. And it must be noted that in so doing he was only giving expression once more to the feeling that prevailed in almost the entire army, including not only the troops in Italy, but also those on the Rhine. How often has Hoche been spoken of as the true son of the French Revolution, the unselfish and obedient servant of the Republic! But it was precisely he who now placed himself entirely and unreservedly at the disposal of the Triumvirs, ready to "forcibly disperse" those lawyers and talkers, those "conspirators of the clubs of Clichy." This was in July, on the occasion of the change in the ministry, when the Triumvirs drove the most moderate of its members out, and replaced them by General Scherer at the Ministry of War, Talleyrand, who now comes again upon the scene, at that of Foreign Affairs, and François Neufchâteau at that of the Interior. To support their action, Hoche, who commanded the Army on the lower Rhine, marched on Paris. But still the Chambers did not give up the game as lost. Carried away by the Royalist feeling in the capital, they strongly protested against the troops coming inside the barriers of Paris as a breach of the Constitution. The Directory, without resources, above all without money, lost courage and gave way. It made its excuses to Hoche, and he had to retire, and withdrew to his quarters on the Rhine with rage in his heart.

At this moment Napoleon unmasked his batteries. On the 14th of July, the day of the storming of the Bastille, he issued a proclamation to his soldiers in which he reminded them of their victories over Europe, their struggles for freedom, and threatened relentless

war against the enemies of the Republic and of the Constitution ; as on eagles' wings they would, if need be, pass over the mountains to defend the Constitution and Liberty, the Government and the Republic. In all the garrisons similar demonstrations followed, on the Rhine as well as in Italy. Then Napoleon sent, one after the other, to Paris three of his most trusted comrades, Lavalette, Augereau, and Bernadotte, the last taking with him the captured standards. At the same time he sent, what Hoche could not give, money. The details of how the intrigue now proceeded will probably never be known, for of the more secret dealings that went on between the organisers of the coming *coup d'état* there are either no records or very unreliable ones. Above all, we have none of Napoleon's letters or other communications on the subject, and the scanty accounts given by Lavalette and Augereau can hardly supply their place. But when it is asserted that Napoleon himself directed the blow that now fell upon the Royalists, certainly far too much is said. He had, indeed, urged that a decisive step should be taken ; yet it is probable that Augereau, a fierce Jacobin, and Barras went further than he himself would have done. He was not in favour of extravagantly violent courses, and we may well believe what he said at St. Helena against the useless cruelty of the victors of the 18th of Fructidor (September 4th), who sent their opponents in barred cages like wild beasts to Rochefort and then banished them to the pestilential swamps of Cayenne. He was in favour of the *coup d'état*, for it was in accord with his policy, and secured the development of the Revolution in his sense. But, far away from Paris, he had no part in the final decision.

He let the Triumvirs act, because he assumed that they would on the whole go his way, and he had a firm determination not to allow himself to be forced out of that way.

In fact, after the triumph of the Triumvirs the old differences immediately broke out again. But again there was proof of the impregnable power of the commander-in-chief of the Army of Italy. In the days when preparations were being made for the decisive step at Paris, the final peace negotiations had begun, on the 30th of August at Udine. They were now expressly left in Napoleon's hands. Acting alone, and accompanied only by his two secretaries, he met the four Austrian plenipotentiaries with Ludwig Cobenzl, the intimate confidant of Thugut, at their head. The negotiations turned especially on two points, the cessions of territory to be made by the Empire, and the delimitation of the acquisitions of the two Powers in Italy. Napoleon was determined not to allow the Austrians to have a foothold anywhere beyond the Adige or the Po. Cobenzl, on the other hand, hoped to get, besides Venetia, Modena and the Legations for his master. What interest, he asked naively, had France in not allowing Austria to cross the Po? Napoleon replied promptly: "The interest of preventing you from being the masters of Italy." "Our ideas," he declared, "are very far from yours. I would deserve to be hanged at Paris if I gave you the Legations." To which Cobenzl answered back: "And I would deserve to be sent to prison in a fortress, if I did not oppose your having Mayence, and even any of the left bank of the Rhine." However, the Austrian negotiator soon let it be seen that he was ready to listen to reason on the subject of

Mayence; but all the more firmly he held out for some compensation for the Emperor in Italy. On the other hand, the Directors were plying Napoleon with letters and instructions, which Barras's secretary, Bottot, personally conveyed to him, and in which they urged him not to give up anything in Italy, but rather to extend the realm of liberty over all of Venetia. In their view the possession of the whole Rhine frontier was a necessary condition of peace. They wanted to revolutionise the Empire as well as Italy, continue the war, and call Prussia to their aid against the Hapsburgs.

Napoleon was thus placed between two fires. He had to hold his ground against the Austrians, and against his own Government. One can understand how this twofold strain brought him into an excited state of mind, that even at the beginning of the negotiations showed itself in violent outbursts against the Emperor's ministers, and finally came to a climax in that scene which he himself at St. Helena described to his companions as the highly dramatic concluding effect at the Conferences; how he snatched up a costly porcelain vase, a present from the Empress Catherine to Cobenzl, and declaring that so would he shatter the Austrian monarchy, dashed it on the ground, and left the room. The truth about this story, on which we have the direct testimony of Cobenzl, makes it bear a somewhat different aspect. The incident occurred on the 11th of October, five days before the close of the Conferences. It is true that there was a very violent scene. Napoleon, who had not slept for two nights and was excited by the opposition of the Austrians, and the effect of some glasses of punch he had taken, allowed himself to indulge in most out-

rageous language, and then with his hat on his head rushed out of the room. The Austrian Count had the best of the incident, for he maintained a collected and polite bearing in presence of the angry young Republican. But it was clear to him, from the conduct of Napoleon, that he could not obtain what he claimed, and that the passionate outburst, the brutality that Napoleon showed towards him, was probably not entirely unpremeditated, however much he may also have been carried away by the feeling of the moment. Napoleon wanted peace, but he also would not allow there to be the slightest doubt that he was ready for a renewed conflict. So he had already written to Talleyrand: "Let us show Monsieur de Thugut war like Medusa's head, and we shall soon bring him to very acceptable conditions." For himself there were only two ways; one must follow him, or fight him.

In this, as in many other points, we have a reminder of Bismarck. So too in the way in which he used the very opposition of the Directory to his plans, in order to bring pressure to bear on his opponents. Never perhaps were his hands so tied; and he had to obey if he was to preserve his influence and popularity. How often did Bismarck in the same way turn to advantage his differences with the King in his dealings with foreign negotiators, for instance in the scene with Benedetti in Moravia.

The end was that on the 17th of October, at the neighbouring village of Campo Formio, Cobenzl put his signature to the conditions dictated to him by Napoleon. Mayence was ceded to France, and the Empire left to take care of itself. In Germany Napoleon promised not to oppose the annexation by

Austria of Salzburg and a part of Bavaria. But in Italy he held fast to the line of Adige and Po; the City of the Lagoons and its people, "who have neither land nor water," he let go.

Towards the Directory too Napoleon displayed all the passionate energy of his character. He gave it once more only the choice between submitting to him or dismissing him. "Nothing is left for me," he wrote on the 10th of October to Talleyrand, "but to return to a place among the mass of the people, take the plough of Cincinnatus in hand, and give an example of respect for those in power, and dislike for that military domination which has brought to ruin so many republics and more empires." But at the same time he did not hesitate to put the Directory face to face with an accomplished fact! At that very moment the draft of the Treaty of Peace was ready, and he counted on signing it that very evening! The Directors had told him that he was to call the Italians to arms. Napoleon pointed out to them that such hopes were Utopian; as if liberty could arouse such an effeminate, superstitious, boastful, and lazy people to great deeds: "What you ask of me are miracles, and I can work no miracles." It is the same letter from which we have already taken the words in which he set forth his disbelief in the power of such unreal things as the love of the peoples for freedom and equality. He adds to it a short essay on the character of his own, the French, nation, and on the principles of true policy. "The most salient characteristic of our nation is that it can be roused to action. If only true policy, which is nothing else but the calculation of combinations and chances, is made the basis of all our undertakings, we will for a long time to come be

the great nation and the arbiters of Europe. I say more: we hold the balance of Europe, and it is for us to say which way it shall incline. Yes, if it is the will of fate, I hold that it is not impossible that in a few years those great ends may be attained, which a heated and enthusiastic imagination can shadow forth, but which only the coolest, most persevering, and most calculating intellect can secure." How often have these words been quoted, but always with a view to pointing to the heaven-storming ambition of the young Titan as the source of his plans for universal dominion. But if we put them in the context from which they have been torn, we recognise that it is really an admonition in favour of moderation. The Directors are those on whose policy, verging on fantastic exaggeration, Napoleon wished to place the rein of coldly calculating reason. It is as if he gave them an extract from his *Discours de Lyon* to read, only that now a conception had been added to it which was a stranger to the trustful mind of the young man, but had become clearer and clearer to him now that he was striving for mastery, with a mind ripened by experience and by his own deeds—a sense of the power of the incalculable—of something not to be reckoned upon, the fate that remains hovering like some all-ruling force over the world of politics, and over each individual, however varied may be his activity, however well calculated his plans. It was the Destiny of France, we repeat, with which he had linked his own. He ventured to cast the horoscope for her, and therefore at the same time for himself. He sees the hour approaching when France will dictate the law to Europe, if only reason with its clear insight will dictate the necessary conditions, and

and if all-controlling fate will permit it. This feeling dominated him, and already when he summoned the Austrian negotiators to meet him at Udine, he had declared to them that as the representative of France he considered himself higher than all the kings; and at Leoben, that the Republic had no need of being officially recognised, for it was in Europe what the sun was in the sky; the worse for them who could not see it, and would not derive any advantage from it.

It was the last struggle that he would have to carry on with the Directors. Henceforth they left him undisturbed; the last time also that his will encountered opposition. His was the victory, his the peace—and his the power which both brought to France.

After all that had happened it was obvious that he would be first among the plenipotentiaries in the sequel of the conferences of Udine, the Congress of Rastatt, at which the peace of the Empire with France was to be concluded, the boundaries between the two Powers defined, and the compensation fixed that the former was to receive for the possessions it was deprived of on the left bank of the Rhine. But before this he pronounced sentence of death on his own creation, the democracy of Venice, and handed it over to Austria. France was not going to offer up the blood of her sons for a foreign state, he told the Venetians; they might try if they liked to defend themselves against Austria. He cleared their harbour of its warships, and the dockyard and arsenals of cannon, and whatever else might be useful for the equipment of the French fleet; he took away the lion of St. Mark, the Bucentaur, the most beautiful works of art, and the most valuable manuscripts from

the churches and palaces; after he had torn the diadem from the brow of her who was once Queen of the Adriatic, he robbed her also of her arms, her treasures, and the symbols of her old renown. He gave the Cisalpine Republic a constitution, arranged for annexing Ancona from the states of the Church, ordered Admiral Brueys to station his fleet off the Ionian Islands, and sent agents to Malta and Turkey. Then, on the 17th of November he began his journey to the Rhine. Wherever he appeared in Savoy, in Switzerland, he was received with public demonstrations; he turned his attention to setting affairs in order, and negotiated and intrigued with rival parties that vied with each other in bringing their interests before him.

On the 25th of November, before the arrival of the Emperor's envoy, he made his entry into Rastatt in a carriage drawn by eight horses, and was surrounded, courted by all the prominent men there, as if he were Destiny itself. As soon as the Emperor's envoys arrived, with Cobenzl again at their head, a settlement was arrived at on the 1st of December. As had been arranged at Campo Formio, first of all Austria declared her renunciation of Mayence, and only then was Venice ceded to her.

The protocol was hardly signed when Napoleon, acting on the invitation of the Directory, started for Paris. As he had secured for himself the advantage of the interior lines in the politics of France, he could leave everything else to the other representatives of the Republic at Rastatt. These had at once to put aside an attempt of the Austrians to bar the maintaining of the "constitutional frontier" of France, already adopted at Udine. The Austrian

proposal had for its object to safeguard the predominance of the empire in Germany, and above all, to prevent Prussia from obtaining anything on the right bank of the Rhine. They proposed giving France the whole left bank, on condition that the Empire should receive compensation on the right. It was a matter on which France had been pledged to Prussia since the treaty of Basel; now that the left bank was lost to the latter, her interests seemed to be best protected by giving her the secularised territory of the prince bishops, instead of what she had to abandon; and the Prussian envoy at once received precise instructions to this effect from his Government. In this, as Ranke has strikingly shown, lay France's advantage, that she held the two great powers of Germany bound to her by these internal questions, and had at the same time set them in opposition to each other. The position of the French diplomats was an unprecedented one. They were asking nothing for themselves, wanted to satisfy everyone, and were setting them all against each other. It was the attitude of a protector, who divides that he may rule. The policy of the future Confederation of the Rhine was already coming into sight.

On the 5th of December Napoleon entered Paris. It was not two years since he had left the city whose streets he had reddened with the blood of her citizens amidst the murmurs of the people, who saw in him not only the man of the 13th of Vendémiaire, but also the foreigner and the protégé of the hated Barras. Now the same Parisians received him with unbounded rejoicings. For he had brought them, or they could hope at length to obtain, what for years they had

been longing for, peace and order, the restoration of all the prosperity that war and revolution, anarchy and the terror, had destroyed, and that only victory over the enemies of France could ensure to them.

Everything had now united to raise this one man above the world around him, above all competitors, and to conduct him to the summit of the Capitol. Not only the fame of his victories, deeds such as the old annals of France hardly knew, but also circumstances, chance, fortune had conspired to lay on his shoulders the chief burden of the conflict, and at the same time to place on his head its most abundant laurels. All the men who before him, or in his time, had taken a leading place in politics and war, had either left the stage or had in various ways suffered a loss of influence. Of the great leaders in war, whom the Revolution had produced, the first, Pichegru, was still in the swamps of Cayenne; the second, Moreau, had suffered defeat in the field, and was compromised by having been privy to Pichegru's conspiracy, a fact which Napoleon himself had discovered; the third, Lazare Hoche, the only one who was perhaps comparable to Napoleon in genius and renown, and might have been his rival, had but lately been cut off in the flower of his manhood by an insidious malady. All parties saw in Napoleon their man, and might so regard him, though in fact he had never belonged to any of them. The official society of Paris prepared for him brilliant feasts and ovations on a grand scale. On the 10th of December, at the Palace of the Luxembourg, richly decorated for the occasion, he conveyed to the Directory, at the "Altar of the Fatherland" erected there, the formal notification of peace. Talleyrand, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, greeted the conqueror

with an extravagant speech. Then Napoleon himself spoke, in broken sentences, and not over clearly, for he was no orator. He told of the triumph of the new Constitution of the Year III, based on reason, over eighteen hundred years of prejudice; of the genius of Liberty that had opened to France the gates of two fair lands, alluding to Italy and Holland; and of the future, a new era in which the fortune of the French people, and with it the freedom of all Europe, would be based upon the best organisation of the laws. The Directors, with their minds divided between mistrust and hope, invited him from the very first day to assist them in their business. He had influence on the nomination of Ambassadors, and the arranging of commands for generals, and gave his advice on the Italian, the Swiss, and the Dutch questions, which daily presented new problems to the Government; but the chief influence, the actual supreme direction of affairs, Napoleon neither possessed, nor did he ask for it. He did not wish to appear as the accomplice of a Barras. He preferred, as he had written from Italy, to play the part of a Cincinnatus. He avoided publicity; put the services of his comrades before his own, as he had done in that speech at the Luxembourg; and preferred to appear in civilian dress. With the public, which quickly forgets, his star actually began to grow a little dim, and outside observers might well think that he would soon be out of fashion. But all the while he was working away with the Government at new and gigantic plans, the execution of which could be placed in his hands alone.

CHAPTER III

IN THE EAST

BUT it was only on the Continent that peace had been established. England—the strongest adversary of all—was still in arms and had no idea of laying them aside. For her the conflict was not a mere politician's war, but a national affair that drew Government and people together, and instead of dividing them, formed a link between the two parties in the country. It was no enmity of to-day, or yesterday, but a heritage of the Republic from the times of the monarchy; and the interval between the last treaty of peace and the renewed outbreak of hostilities in the spring of 1793 had been short enough. In France, too, no wars of the old monarchy had been more popular than those against England. In the eighteenth century, between the Bourbons and the great Powers of the Continent, there had been alternations of war and negotiations, friendship and alliance. But England, on the other hand, except during a short truce that had been unprofitable for France, had always been in the ranks of her enemies. She too was the foe against whom Napoleon had seen his first war service in the French army, and from whom he had won his first laurels. At Toulon he had led the storming columns against English defences; he had fired shot from his cannon against English ships; he had received his first wound from

an English bayonet. The batteries he had erected along the Ligurian coast, the raid upon Leghorn, the closing of all the Italian ports that he had brought under the rule or the influence of France, the plundering of the Venetian arsenals, the restless activity of naval preparations, the designs on Corfu and Sardinia, Elba and Malta, and the despatch of the Italian brigades that were moving towards the southern and western coast—all these measures were directed against the English.

For a while it had seemed as if France could make peace also with this enemy. In October, 1796, and again in the summer of 1797, there had been negotiations with this object at Paris and Lille. On the first occasion they were broken off by the English; on the second, after the 18th of Fructidor, by the Directory. Napoleon had thoroughly agreed with the course taken by his Government, for his policy was as strongly hostile to England as it was actively in favour of peace with the Continental Powers. "Let us concentrate," he wrote, "our entire activity in the direction of the sea, and destroy England. This done, Europe will be at our feet."

If an attack was to be made on England, there were three ways open for it. The shortest, which struck at the heart, was across the Channel. But even if the soldiers of the Republic, like Cæsar's legions of old and the mail-clad horsemen of William the Norman, might hope, with little trouble, to drive before them this island people, unaccustomed to the sight of war, they had not the means of conquering the floating fortresses that protected the coasts of England. Yet thrice already the French had made the attempt. First in 1794, when their armament

was shattered in the sea-fight of the First of June. Then in the late autumn of 1796, under Lazare Hoche, whose favourite idea it had been: those old allies of England, the winds and the waves, had driven him back into the French harbours, and to the storm that held his ships in its grasp was due the beginning of the illness that so quickly wasted away the young soldier's strength. A year after, when the peace negotiations had for the second time broken down, a new expedition was planned, based on the coasts of Holland. But the Dutch fleet, which was to protect it, suffered at Camperdown the same fate that had already more than once befallen the fleets of the Republic, disorganised as they were by the Revolution, and England remained mistress of the seas.

The second way of striking at the enemy led across the Rhine, into the ancestral dominions of the English Kings, the Hanoverian territory by the mouths of the Ems, Weser, and Elbe, which would thus be closed to the English. In the year 1756 the French had crossed the Rhine and thus come into conflict with the power of Prussia. How could the Republic now venture to penetrate into territories virtually protected by this great neighbouring state, whose neutrality it had purchased three years ago precisely by recognising North Germany as its sphere of influence? The result might be the breaking up of the peace of the Continent, and the old enemies of France, who had only just been separated, would thus be driven to side with each other again.

Only one course therefore was left: to attack England in her colonial possessions, unless, as Napoleon himself wrote, one could be content to make peace.

Beyond the Atlantic, where the old monarchy had tried to assail her, there was nothing more to be done, for the people of the United States, notwithstanding the advent of Liberty and a Republic in France, had not the remotest idea of repaying the help they had had from Frenchmen for the establishment of their own freedom. The West Indian islands were too small a prize for the conflict, for even their loss would have been a mere scratch for England. It was in India, and there only, that one could hope, if not to strike at the enemy's heart, at least, to wound his heel. Here too allies were to be found in the native princes, against whom the brothers Wellesley were still carrying on a fierce struggle. But how was one to go so far, seeing that the English were lords of all coasts and seas of Africa and Asia, were making prizes of French, Dutch, and Spanish ships and colonies, and had taken possession of the Cape of Good Hope? There was just one way, much shorter than the Cape passage round Africa, which seemed to be as practicable by land as by water, at least for its second half. It lay through Egypt. If one could get possession of the mouths of the Nile and the shores of the Red Sea, there was no need of the Cape route, for one would hold the double gateways between East and West. It was a plan that can neither be said to be new to French history, nor over-venturesome. For we need not go back to the earlier days of old France, and recall the expedition of St. Louis, and how the French knights were the first to carry the banner of the Crusades into the East, or how the busy brain of Leibnitz had worked out a similar plan for Louis XIV. In the eighteenth century, and since the beginning of the struggle in India that had gone

so unfavourably for France, the idea had become a popular one. Publicists like Raynal, Volney, and Laclos, and practical statesmen, like the Duc de Choiseul, who had been forced to conclude the Peace of Versailles, had turned their thoughts to it. And quite lately a report had been received from Charles Magallon, the Consul-General of the Republic at Alexandria, in which he set forth the ease with which Egypt might be conquered, and the advantages which that country offered through its fertility and its position. So little reason is there for saying that the plan sprang from the wild imagination of Napoleon, and was a proof of his lust for conquest, urging him into schemes of boundless ambition. He thought, as indeed others did, especially in view of the actual situation, more of the trade of the Levant than of that of Eastern Asia, more of the mastery of the Mediterranean than of dominion in India. He had dreamed of this while he was still a Corsican ; in his earlier writings he had connected the future of Corsica with the mastery of the Mediterranean. Still more must he have entertained such ideas since he had thrown in his lot with France. In a document written so far back as the winter of 1792, he had, from this point of view, recommended the seizure of the Maddelena Islands (on the north coast of Sardinia).

The project for the fortification of the Bay of San Fiorenzo (North Corsica) which he drew up a little later, dwells on the advantages the place might offer to the enemies of France "if we lose the trident of the Mediterranean or if our right to it is challenged." Every step which he took in the conquest of Italy, and above all in the occupation of Ancona, Genoa,

and the Ionian Islands, had this object in view, and each step brought him nearer to the point when he would be tempted, and even compelled, to make an effort to secure this end. Then we must not forget that the English had the same idea. If they wished for the dominion of India, they must hold the way through the Mediterranean as well as the route by the Cape. And for them too the command of the Mediterranean was an object to which, for its own sake, their policy must naturally direct itself. For a century, thanks to the rock fortress of Gibraltar, they held at least its gateway. The war against the Revolution had led them to take far-reaching action in its waters, and even to occupy Corsica and Toulon. They had lost both these places, and lost them through Napoleon's victories. In Corsica, in the summer of 1796, they had had to evacuate the last of the fortified places that Paoli had handed over to them, and had taken away with them into a now unwilling exile the old hero, who at last had quarrelled with them. But their fleet had remained in Mediterranean waters, and found in the harbours of Sicily, Naples, and Sardinia friendly sources of supply and a base of operations for watching the enemy's coasts. If Napoleon on his voyage to Egypt had let slip the opportunity offered him of seizing Malta, a *coup de main* for the possession of that incomparable maritime fortress would have been carried out by Nelson, sooner or later. The Directory rightly put forward as a reason for the expedition to Egypt that it was an anticipation of possible English action there. But the conquest of the Nile Valley was in itself an object that must have been highly attractive to French politicians. There were not only its strategic situa-

tion on the dividing line between two quarters of the world and the prospect of shortening the trade route to the Indies, but also, as Napoleon pointed out to Talleyrand in September, 1797, there was the wealth of its soil, which would soon recompense the nation for the products of the West Indies that had been lost and gone to England. Let us add that the cutting of the Isthmus of Suez had also a place in these projects, and we see their significance as a forecast of the development of the Egyptian question in the nineteenth century. Napoleon's expedition to the East was not so much a repetition of the campaign of Alexander, with which it has been so often compared, or of the *Gesta Dei per Francos* in the Middle Ages, as the brilliant overture to the drama which was played out in the last century, and the closing act of which we probably witnessed some twenty years ago, when England took possession of the land of the Pharaohs.

This prophetical character of Napoleon's policy is seen also in the fact that his attempt on Egypt for the first time brought upon the stage the whole sphere of the Eastern question. The problem that was intimately connected with the Egyptian expedition was, how would Turkey regard it? And would it be possible to carry it through without agitating the whole East, above all without drawing into it the Christian powers of the East, Austria and Russia? The maintenance of friendship with the Porte was a part of the oldest traditions of French policy. Only thus had it been possible in earlier times to make a stand against the preponderance of the Hapsburgs, especially in the Mediterranean, and during the last ten years the new as well as the old France had been faithful to this policy. Her rivals, Russia and Austria, had always

been the opponents of Turkey, which was engaged in a hard fight with them at the very moment when the Revolution began. It was in view of this that, as early as 1785, the Porte had asked for French officers to reorganise its army and navy, and we have already seen how in the autumn of 1795 Napoleon himself had tried to obtain employment of this kind. There is no doubt that he was even now inspired by friendly intentions towards the Porte. He wished and hoped at least to keep it on his side. It is true that Egypt belonged in name to the Sultan, but in fact it was in the hands of the Mamelukes, and what Napoleon and his Government hoped to secure on the Nile was not the sovereignty of the country, but what we now call a protectorate, and therefore he had in view quite a modern method of extending a nation's power. The object, the attainment of which he had most at heart, was to come into possession of Egypt as a protecting power on behalf of Turkey. The idea was that immediately after the occupation had been effected, Talleyrand himself should arrive in the Bosphorus on a frigate as ambassador, and place the power of France at the disposal of the Sultan against his enemies, and if need be against Russia.

But what if the Sultan should decide to take up an unfriendly attitude towards the not altogether correct policy that France was pursuing? In this case Napoleon and his friends would go to work in another way. They thought it would be time to bring about a revolt of the Christian subjects of the Porte. It was especially on the Greeks that they reckoned. They would, wrote Napoleon, be called to arms in the name of liberty, as had been done in the past in the name of religion. He considered

that they would be even more accessible to French than to Russian influence. It is worth noting that in this plan Austria was supposed to take a place on the side of France. It was thought that by means of a partition it would be even easier to satisfy her than Russia. Thus, as so often happened in the Middle Ages, a campaign in the East might turn into a stroke at Constantinople. The rashness of the policy which the Directory resolved upon in the spring of 1798 arose from these possibilities and dangers of the future, and the prospect of the peace that had hardly been established on the Continent being again broken up, bringing about new coalitions against France, and disturbing the old traditional basis of French policy.

But first of all, in February, Napoleon had actually turned his attention to the direct attack upon England. On the 8th of February, after he had been already named commander-in-chief of the "Army of England," he proceeded to the north coast to examine the chances of the enterprise. He soon convinced himself that in the existing state of the French armaments it was not to be thought of, and then he turned to the plans for Egypt with that peculiarly restless energy that was all his own. But the frontal attack was only deferred. By the end of September, according to his calculations, the Brest squadron and the fleet of transports could be placed in readiness on the coast by Boulogne and Dunkirk. He himself hoped to get over the expedition to Egypt, found the colony, and yet be back by autumn, and in the long nights of October or November personally direct the great stroke against England. He might assume that the conquest of Egypt would draw a part of the English fleet

in that direction and would keep it tied up in the Mediterranean.

By the 22nd of April all the preparations were complete and Napoleon was on the point of starting for the south, when news came from Vienna that threatened to unsettle everything again. The French ambassador, General Bernadotte, had been most gravely insulted, not without having himself given some provocation, for he had irritated both the Court and the people by his conceited, overbearing conduct, and by the intrigues he had set on foot with some members of the Opposition. It had ended in a riot in front of the embassy. The mob had torn down the tricolour from the balcony, smashed windows and doors and forced their way into the house, so that Bernadotte had to face them with sword and pistols. He had then demanded his passports and gone back to France. As matters stood, nothing could be more unwelcome to Napoleon than this incident. At the moment he had the most urgent interest in keeping the Continent at peace. For Austria too the affair was most inopportune ; and so both parties were anxious to try to reach a settlement. One of the Directory, François de Neufchâteau, and Cobenzl had a meeting on the subject at Selz in Alsace. Napoleon waited a little longer at Toulon than had originally been intended, and was further delayed by unfavourable winds. On the 19th of May he put to sea. By the 29th he had been joined by the divisions that had embarked in the ports of Italy. More than four hundred transports, escorted by a strong fleet of warships under Admiral Brueys, conveyed eastwards 35,000 men of the Army of Italy, under the generals who had led it to victory under Napoleon. Besides his old comrades in arms Napoleon

was accompanied by a staff of savants, engineers, writers, and interpreters, amongst them men like Monge, the great mathematician, who had been with him at Udine, and the chemist Berthollet.

Everything had been planned on the grandest scale. It was intended to secure the archæological treasures that were to be looked for in the land of the old civilisation of the Pharaohs, seek them out, and transfer them to France, as had been done with the masterpieces of Italian art. And at the same time the intended colony would have at its disposal the scientific direction that would be required for the increase of its natural resources and for the cutting of the isthmus of Suez. So this expedition began, which will always be noteworthy for the wonderful good fortune that seemed to protect it. For now the English, who about the 20th of April had got some idea of what was in progress, were on the alert, and had sent Nelson with a squadron to the south coast of France. On the 17th of May he lay in the Gulf of Lions on the look out. A storm dispersed his ships, and he had to spend eight days on the south coast of Sardinia, repairing damages. When he came back he found that the birds had flown. He at once sailed for the waters on the coast of Tuscany, where on the 7th of June he received considerable reinforcements, but could get no intelligence as to where the enemy was to be found. During these days, Napoleon, who knew nothing of Nelson's arrival, was on his way to Malta. Brueys had already appeared before the island in February to reconnoitre it. But nevertheless the Maltese had neglected to make any military preparations, and they were utterly surprised when on the 9th of June the French fleet showed itself off the harbour. It would in-

deed have been no difficult matter to hold the immensely strong fortifications for at least a few days till the English could come. But on the island, as in the French fleet, there was no idea that they were so close at hand. And then among the knights there was embarrassment, perplexity, and probably treason, excitement among the people, and helpless stupidity on the part of the head of the Order of Malta, the timid and narrow-minded Count Hompesch. In short, after a few days of feeble opposition a surrender was accepted and the French flag flew over all the forts. And then Napoleon, leaving a garrison of three thousand men, shaped his course for the East. He was off Crete when news came that Nelson had sailed from Naples for Malta. Then on the 28th of June, for the first time, he informed the army by a proclamation what was the task that was set before it. He outlined the inestimable results that the conquest of Egypt would have for the civilisation and trade of the world, and told how England would thereby be wounded in the heel. "We shall have wearisome marches," he said; "we shall fight some battles. All will go well with us. Destiny is on our side." Crete, which they had left to the northwards, had hardly been passed when more precise news of the enemy arrived. On the 30th of June a frigate, which had been sent on in advance to Alexandria, brought back the information that Nelson had appeared before that port with fourteen ships of the line; but as no one there knew anything of the French fleet he had gone off to the northwards two days ago.

This was, in fact, what had happened. When the Admiral reached Malta, the French fleet had just got away. Immediately he had crowded all

sail to overtake them, and he had done the voyage so quickly that he was at Alexandria before them. Burning with eagerness to come up with the enemy, he set his course on the same day for the Syrian coast, then, as he could get no news there also, he sailed for Asia Minor and so back to the westward. "The devil's children," he wrote, "have the devil's luck. This Bonaparte commands his troops at sea just as well as if they were an army on land." Napoleon's luck was indeed unparalleled; but he knew, too, how to make full use of it. On the 1st of July he arrived before the city of Alexander the Great. The day was nearly at an end; the sea was stormy; the surf on the shore dangerous. But without hesitation, and not without some loss, he got his troops on shore. Early next morning the walls of the city, which were hardly defended, were stormed at a rush and all opposition crushed. On the same day he announced in a proclamation in Arabic addressed to the Arabs and Copts that he came as one who honoured God and the Prophet; as the destroyer of the Papacy and of the Order of Malta, and as the friend of the Sultan, to free them from the tyranny of the Mamelukes. These were not a tribe, but a band of soldiers chiefly recruited by the purchase of slaves. Originally the bodyguard of the Caliphs, they now numbered some 10,000 horsemen. Fanatical, brave, but badly armed with old muskets and hardly any cannon, they were not a power that could oppose any strong resistance to the French. But these had other obstacles to fear—the march through the sandy desert under blazing heat, without shade, without water; the resourceless poverty of the villages; and when they reached the Nile gastric troubles caused

by muddy water and bad or scanty food. So there was a sense of relief when at last the troops came in sight of the enemy, and the Mamelukes dashed in reckless onset against their squares. The serious fighting began on the 13th of July; the decisive action took place on the 21st at Embabeh (near Cairo), where the whole force of the Mamelukes had formed an entrenched camp. The wild charges of the horsemen were shattered by the volley-firing of the French; they escaped in headlong flight, and their camp fell easily into the hands of the victors. The prize of victory was the occupation of Cairo, a populous city, but without the eastern splendour that the French soldiers had expected to see there. Amongst the squalid houses there were only two handsome palaces of the Mamelukes. But these warriors, under their two Beys, Murad and Ibrahim, found means to keep the conquerors busy enough. Murad Bey was retiring through Upper Egypt, whither Desaix was sent after him. Ibrahim Bey had taken refuge in the desert in the direction of Syria, whence he soon again made raids close up to Cairo with his horsemen. It was in vain that Napoleon himself tried to get a hold of him; he disappeared again into the wilderness of sand. And when on the 13th of August Napoleon came back to Cairo, one of Kleber's staff officers was waiting for him with the news that the fleet had been destroyed.

It was Nelson's work. On his voyage westwards he had gone as far as Syracuse, then turned again, and when off the Morea he had at last obtained certain intelligence that four weeks earlier the enemy had sailed south-east from Crete; that is, on the course for Egypt. Now, he had only one idea—to

fight, and, as he wrote to Lady Hamilton, "be covered with laurels or with cypress." Late in the afternoon of the 1st of August he came upon the enemy's fleet in the roadstead of Aboukir. Without losing a moment he attacked, pushing through the narrow channel between the left of the French line and the land, which Brueys had hoped to bar by means of batteries on the shore. With the wind in their favour the English ships came down the French line, attacking on both sides, destroying one wing in detail before its consorts could beat up to its aid. The battle lasted through the night and into the following morning. Rear-Admiral Villeneuve succeeded in getting away with only two ships. All the rest were riddled, burned, or captured. Half the crews, and with them the Admiral, were at the bottom of the sea.

This, then, was the news the all-conquering general heard when he came back from the desert. His bearing at this moment was magnificent. "The loss of our fleet," he said to his friend and comrade Marmont, "will probably compel us to do greater things in this country than we anticipated." "One must keep one's head above the waves, and the waves will calm down." Then and later he laid the blame for the disaster on Brueys, and at any rate we may say this much, that he himself in the place of Brueys would have been quicker about making up his mind to some better course of action. In so far he reasoned rightly when in his report to the Directory he even took up the defence of the fickle Goddess of Fortune, and justified her by pointing out how she had made the voyage possible; how in the roar of storm the troops had landed; how Alexandria had been taken by three thousand tired-out soldiers, without artillery

and almost without cartridges; and how in five days he had the whole coast in his possession. These five days ought to have been time enough to put the fleet in a place of safety, "once Fortune sees that all her favours are offered in vain, then only she leaves our fleet to its fate." All communications, reinforcements, almost all information from outside, was henceforth impossible for the army, cut off as it was from Europe. Like Corfu and Malta, the Egyptian colony found itself in the position of a fortress for which all relief is impossible.

But the importance of the "Battle of the Nile" did not consist only in the destruction of the hopes built upon the Egyptian expedition. It set Europe again in movement. At once the Turks joined the enemies of France. If the plans upon which Napoleon had counted had been successfully executed, the fleet taken back to Corfu or Malta, and Talleyrand at Constantinople with an offer of alliance, probably the Sultan would have entered into a compact which promised him protection against Russia, the traditional enemy of Turkey. Then Nelson might have found a difficulty in maintaining his ships in the eastern basin of the Mediterranean. But the Sultan could weave no bonds of alliance with a power whose weakness had been shown and its glory tarnished in so decisive a way. Hard pressed, and at the same time flattered by the diplomacy of Russia and England, Selim III preferred to throw himself into the arms of France's enemies. On the news that the Russian Black Sea Fleet had put to sea, he published a Haatischerif, in which he proclaimed the Holy War against the invaders of Egypt. On the 2nd of September the French ambassador was sent to the prison of the

Seven Towers, and on the 3rd the Russian Fleet was welcomed at Constantinople. United with a Turkish squadron it proceeded at once to attack Corfu, which was forced to capitulate before the end of September. In Italy too all the old opponents of France roused themselves to action as soon as the news of the great battle arrived. Foremost of all, the Neapolitan Court, which was closely menaced by the existence of a Republic at Rome and by the Revolutionary propaganda in its own territories, at once decided upon beginning the war. The Queen Maria Carolina, a daughter of Maria Theresa, impetuous and passionate as her mother and sister, had no other thought but to avenge the blood of Marie Antoinette on her murderers. On the 22nd of September, the English fleet arrived in the Bay of Naples, and now there was no more hesitation. The victorious admiral was welcomed as a saviour and liberator. Those days at Naples when Nelson, entangled by the charms of Lady Hamilton, seemed to forget voyages on the sea and the thunder of battle amid an exciting round of festivities at a wanton court have been spoken of as his Capua. But not for a moment did he lose sight of the enemy and of the interests of England. The influence that his lover possessed with the Queen, the very spell that she had cast over him, he used in the interest of his Government. He swept away the last arguments put forward by the peace party and hurried Naples on to the attack.

No Power that had belonged to the old coalition hesitated longer about renewing the war than Austria, which had maintained the conflict the longest. Thugut was very angry at little Naples taking it on herself to light up a world-wide war, instead of waiting for

orders from Vienna. He declared that his Government would not support the offensive in Italy. But in October, when the advance of the Neapolitans on Rome had ended in lamentable failure, and the Grisons threatened to break away from the French side, it was considered, even in Vienna, that the time for holding back was past, and the moment come for giving up the peace of Campo Formio, which had always been regarded there as a mere truce. At the end of 1798 the second coalition against France was ready.

It can be no part of our work to describe in detail the changing fortunes which the new war brought for France. And therefore I merely mention the grave disasters which the Republic, now left without leaders, suffered on the battlefields of the Upper Rhine, in the Alps, and on the plains of Lombardy. Thrice were her armies destroyed by the victories of the allies, never was she nearer a downfall, and who knows if her last hour would not then have struck were it not that in the midst of their very successes the allies broke away from each other, when Suvaroff, after his greatest triumph at Novi, started on his madly brave, but strategically inexplicable march over the St. Gothard, during which his army went to ruin. It was now that Massena, undoubtedly the best of the Republican generals, after his victory at Zurich, succeeded in making himself master of Switzerland, and thus restored some equality of forces in this direction. But even so there was yet no saying how it would all end, and it looked as if the Republic must succumb to the pressure of superior strength. Then too at home the army of its enemies had been aroused once more. It was the old round of events, through which

the Revolution had passed more than once already under the influence of the struggle with foreign Powers. Every defeat brought new strength to the forces of anarchy at home, and led the party which desired to carry the Revolution onward to its full accomplishment, to use sharper means of repression. But only victory could really ensure its dominion. The more serious the defeats, the more terrible the misery of the country; the greater the tyranny, the more embittered was the resistance that the Revolutionists met with among their own fellow-countrymen. At the new elections in April, the Jacobins had again come to the front, thanks to a *coup d'état* on the 30th of Prairial. But their ill fortune in the field, and above all the defeat at Novi, where General Joubert lost both the battle and his own life, was once more a gain for the moderates and the reactionaries. There were new dissensions in the Directory and in the Ministry. An attempt to raise a forced loan led to nothing. The depreciation of the paper currency was greater than ever. The Chouans were again in arms, thousands strong, in La Vendée and in the south. When in September Jourdan, one of the Hotspurs of the Chamber, brought forward a demand for the punishment of the enemies of Liberty, the majority in the Chamber itself repudiated him and the proposal was rejected. The result of it all was the same as that of the battlefields. Official France, torn by parties which counterbalanced each other, could neither go backwards nor forwards. The State organisation created by the Revolution was not destroyed, but its rulers were powerless to consolidate it, and to find a point on which the contending parties could draw together and come to an agreement. But

the great mass of the people had only one thought; to enjoy the primary blessings of existence, a secure and quiet life, order and peace in the home; the recovery of private prosperity and national trade; and above all the restoration of peace to the Church. Whoever could bring about all this would be their Messiah.

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No one saw more clearly than Bonaparte that the very first condition for the founding of an Egyptian colony must be peace on the Continent and friendship with Turkey, and that the possibility of safe communication with France by sea must at least be kept in view. But at the outset, the breaking up of the peace of Campo Formio, and the appearance of Turkey in the ranks of his enemies, never entered into his calculations. And then, he could never have imagined that the Republic would so soon be hurled from the height of victory to which he had raised it. But, above all, he did not know such a word as *Despair*. Even two months after the Battle of the Nile, he wrote to the Directory that the colony could be held, that India might be threatened from Egypt, that if the Turks meant to join the enemy they must be fought or compelled to make peace, and the English must be drawn away from Egypt by an attack on their own island. And even the idea of reaching India by sea was not altogether chimerical. England had hardly any warships in the Red Sea and on the Indian Ocean, and not only Napoleon and his Government, but their opponents, also took serious account of this view. Nelson, indeed, more than once expressed the greatest anxiety on the subject. "An enterprising enemy," he wrote on the 29th of June to

Lord St. Vincent, "if he had an understanding with the Pasha of Egypt and Tippoo Sahib, might easily get a fleet from Suez to the Malabar Coast, and this would be a most serious danger for England's Indian possessions." But for this Napoleon must first have secure possession of Egypt. So far as the military point of view went, and as against the Mamelukes, this was quickly obtained. Before the end of the autumn, General Desaix had cleared the country as far as the First Cataract of its former oppressors. Napoleon hoped to gain over the Arabs and Copts, and even the Turks in Egypt, by respecting their property and religion, and maintaining their laws. A divan of native sheikhs acting as the supreme council at Cairo, with others in the provinces, acting of course under the control of French agents, had the care of the administration of the country, the collection of the taxes, and the relations between the population and the troops. Natives were engaged for the police, and Turks, Copts, and even blacks, enlisted for the army. How seriously Napoleon took his plans for the colony is shown by his creation of a local Institute, for which he had taken the savants with him. Monge was at the head of it as president, and he himself was vice-president. Everyone knows how important for the rediscovery of ancient Egypt the studies thus begun have been. But all the works of peace must give way to the necessities entailed by war. Taxation, the requisitioning of horses, and the enforcement of disarmament, began to create excitement and hostility among the people, and presently reports were spread about the country that the Sultan had proclaimed the Holy War, and that his ships and his armies were at hand. In October there was sud-

denly a rising of the people in Cairo. In all parts of the country French posts were attacked. English ships opened fire upon Alexandria and Aboukir. Napoleon, in the face of these events, had no other resource but the most fearful severity. At the outset the grape-shot from his guns stood him in as good stead against the people of Cairo as it had against the Parisians in Vendémiaire; then in the city and the provinces sanguinary executions day after day gradually imposed peace upon the conquered people. It was the method "by which," as Napoleon wrote, "these people were to be made to obey, for with them to obey is the same thing as to fear." He had taken care not to destroy the Terrorist reputation that had gone before him. But now he insisted on it, as if he had been accustomed to it from the very outset. "Make known to the people," he said to the Mullahs of Cairo, in the style of the Koran, and with the tone of the prophet, "that he who wantonly sets himself against me shall find salvation neither in this world nor in the next. Is anyone so blind as not to see that Destiny guides all my steps? Or so faithless as to doubt that everything in the Universe is subject to Destiny? . . . I could demand a reckoning for the most secret thoughts of each one, for I know everything, even those things about which ye have always been silent. But the day will come when it will be plain to everyone that I follow the bidding of the Highest, and that no human efforts can do anything against me."

Meanwhile the danger was drawing nigh of which rumour had spoken in October. Towards the end of December Napoleon was at Suez, investigating the traces of the ancient canal, when he was informed

that Turkish troops had seized the fort of El Arish on the Syrian frontier. He dare not await the attack in a country still simmering with revolt. He must anticipate it. At the head of four divisions, in all 13,000 men, he set out at the beginning of February (1799). El Arish was quickly taken, and Gaza also. After a more stubborn resistance he stormed Jaffa, against which the abomination of desolation was decreed. It was there that 3000 of the enemy, after they had laid down their arms, were shot on the seashore. It is one of the most awful deeds in the history of war. It may have been because there was no means of feeding the prisoners; or because they were the former garrison of El Arish, who, although they had been released there, had nevertheless taken part in the fighting at Jaffa and were now overtaken by vengeance for this action of theirs; or, what seems very possible, it may have been because the conqueror merely wished by this bloodshed again to spread the terror of his name on a grand scale. It was as if he meant to contend with his next antagonist Djezzar Pasha for his nickname, given to him for his cruelties (Djezzar means "butcher"). All the same he had made a miscalculation. On the 18th of March he arrived before St. Jean d'Acre, the ancient Akkon, the residence of the Pasha. But here he met with a resistance that no effort of his could break down, and such as he could hardly have anticipated. For beside the Turks he saw the English in the fortress. Sir Sidney Smith, the commodore of the English squadron in Syrian waters, had come to the help of the besieged and had reinforced them with heavy artillery and with his officers and men. An attempt to relieve the place by land was beaten off, a large

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE, FIRST CONSUL.

From a painting by F. Gérard. Photo by Lévy et ses Fils.

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advance his own army had reduced by fire and pillage to the condition of a desert. And after that there would be nine whole days of marching across a wilderness of sand. It was thus the middle of June before he arrived at his Egyptian capital with his troops decimated by bullets and disease, ragged, and utterly exhausted. He was hardly there when tidings came of new enemies. They were the Turks and Mamelukes again by land and English and Turkish ships by sea. On the 12th of July a strong Turkish army, convoyed by Sir Sidney Smith, appeared in the roadstead of Aboukir and disembarked and entrenched itself there on a peninsula, which, protected on both sides by the sea, was only accessible from the land by a narrow pass. On the 25th of July Napoleon, who knew not what hesitation meant, directed an attack with all his available forces against the line of redoubts that had been thrown up to cover the hostile camp from sea to sea. The Turks could not stand against the furious onset of the French, who were here fighting for very existence. The left and right wings were stormed, and then the centre attacked by Murat with a wild charge of horsemen, and the Turks were surrounded and driven into the sea on which they had counted for protection. It was one of the most brilliant and also one of the most sanguinary days in all our hero's campaigns. Just so, in the past, on another point of the North African coast, the Peninsula of Thapsus, Cæsar had destroyed his enemies and driven them into the sea. Six thousand of the Turks fell under the French bullets or were drowned in the waves, which here for once seemed to be really Napoleon's allies. Four thousand laid down their arms. Not a man escaped.

Napoleon was very imperfectly informed as to what was happening in Europe. Only some scanty news had reached him either by sea, or by land by way of Tunis and Tripoli. He put himself in communication with Sidney Smith, who from his ships had witnessed the terrible spectacle. The Commodore said that he might tell him he had heard from Nelson that the French Government had decided to recall Napoleon and his army. He also handed him newspapers which contained reports of the earlier defeats of Jourdan in Germany and Scherer in Italy, and asked him to test the information. Then he sailed away from the coast for Cyprus, to obtain a supply of fresh water for his ships, which Napoleon would not allow him to get in Egypt. The Commodore probably thought that either his opponent would not risk putting to sea, or that if he did he could come up with him and capture him. But he did not know his man.

We have seen that Napoleon even before he started for Egypt, had set his mind on getting back to Europe as early as the autumn of 1798, and this with a view to making the direct attack on England. Such plans were not to be thought of after the Battle of the Nile; he had perforce to think only of holding possession of Egypt. But he had never quite given up the idea of returning home, nor had the Directory itself at any time thought of restricting his full liberty of action in this respect. In October, and again in February, immediately before his foray into Syria, he had written to his Government on the subject, and in each case in connection with the possibility or the imminence of an outbreak of war on the Continent. In the instructions dated the 26th

of May, and referred to in Sidney Smith's information, the project in view was indeed the return of the whole expedition. Admiral Bruix, who was then on the Genoese coast, was to effect a junction with the Spanish fleet, seek out and defeat the English squadron, which was now reduced in strength, and then bring back Napoleon and his army to Europe. But even in this project the Directory had left it to Napoleon's discretion whether a portion of the troops might remain in Egypt, provided he could answer for their security, and they had expressly indicated as their most earnest desire to see him at the head of the Republican armies. In any case he could say to himself that if he decided to come back without the army, he would be acting neither against nor without the orders of his Government. He did not indeed yet know the whole extent of the defeats which the Republic was just then suffering,—for these were the days of Novi[1]—the complete change of the whole position and its hopelessness. All this he only learned after his return.

We see now clearly how little real ground there was for the slander which his enemies soon enough put into circulation, and which has since been repeated a thousand times, and developed into the most wonderful theories and accusations, namely the story that he basely deserted his comrades, and acted against the orders of the Directory, with no other inducement than the hope of securing his own advantage, protecting his private interest, and taking advantage of the defeat and disorganisation of the country to obtain

[1] *Translator's note.*—The battle of Novi was fought on the 15th of August, 1799, within three weeks of Napoleon's interview with Sidney Smith.

power and even the crown itself. He might have truly said to himself that even for Egypt safety could only be found by his coming to the help of the tottering State. The moment it was clear to him that the colony, like a fortress left without hope of relief from outside, must sooner or later be lost, his return to Europe was a necessity. For it was now only on the Continent that the victory could be won which the Battle of the Nile made impossible on the sea.

It is easy to see why he did not let the army know of his decision until he had acted upon it. But it is not so easy to explain why his successor in command, General Kleber, was only informed of the task entrusted to him after his chief had already departed; and one can readily imagine the depression of spirit in which he thereupon reported to the Directory that the situation was a miserable one. As a matter of fact, as Kleber himself soon showed by his victory at Heliopolis,[1] the state of affairs was not so desperate, and, as Napoleon had said at an earlier date, the colony was tenable. Even the dagger of the fanatic who slew Kleber did not seriously affect French rule in Egypt. Napoleon had actually already re-established peace on the Continent when in September, 1801, the country fell into the hands of England. Granted that Napoleon fought for his own interests; but just then his interests were those of France. Granted that it was his ambition to obtain power in France and to have

[1] *Translator's note.*—In March, 1800, the Turkish Grand Vizier entered Egypt with 60,000 men, advanced on Cairo and entrenched himself at Matariya (Heliopolis), with his right on the Nile and his left in the desert. Kleber attacked him on the 20th of March, 1800, with a much smaller force, stormed the camp, and completely broke up the Turkish army. The Vizier retreated into Syria with a mere remnant of it.

the decisive direction of affairs in his hands; but he might say that it was his work that had been destroyed, and that he was the man who could restore what the incapacity of others had brought to ruin.

On the night of the 22nd of August he set sail from Alexandria. With him in two frigates and a couple of other vessels there were some two hundred of his men, his friends Bourrienne and Lavalette, Generals Lannes, Marmont, Berthier, Murat, and Andréossy, and his colleagues of the Institute, Monge and Berthollet. The voyage was long delayed by bad weather, for they could not wait for the favourable autumn winds. In three weeks they were only abreast of Tunis. In the night with all their lights covered they succeeded in slipping past the cruisers that Nelson, who was lying at anchor at Syracuse without suspicion of the daring adventure, had sent to watch the passage between Cape Bon and Malta. Bearing round to the west of Sicily, the little squadron, now helped by fair winds, sailed into the harbour of Ajaccio on the 30th of September. It was thus that Napoleon saw once more his native city. He had been forced to leave it six years before amid the execrations of his fellow-countrymen, a fugitive and an exile. Now he was surrounded by the rejoicings of his fellow-citizens, whom his victories had brought back to the rule of France, but who nevertheless greeted him on his return as their national hero, the reviver of the glory of Corsica. The sight of the home that he had once so dearly loved, the meeting once more with relatives and friends, moved him very deeply, as an eye-witness tells us. Amongst the crowd that, heedless of the quarantine ordained through fear of the eastern plague, pressed into the boats and came

off to the ships, there was a woman of the people, who, waving her hand excitedly, called out to him, "*Caro figlio, caro figlio!*" and the answer, "*Madre, madre!*" came back from the deck of the frigate. It was the old nurse of the hero who thus greeted him. Later he loaded her and her people with benefits, and even at St. Helena he spoke of the pleasure given him by her fidelity.

At Ajaccio Napoleon heard of the latest disasters on the battlefields of Italy, and the hopeless disorder in the country itself. If, as is said, he had thought during the voyage of hurrying at once to the scene of his former victories, his one thought now was to get to Paris, the centre of the crisis. The weather, which detained him for eight days in port, had hardly become fair again, when he set sail for Toulon. It was a farewell for ever to his native city. First on his voyage to Elba and again on his last voyage to France, the emperor was able again to send a far-off greeting to the hills of Corsica. And now his enterprise was within a hair's-breadth of disaster. An English squadron cruising in the Gulf of Lions caught sight of the French sailing ships, and at once went in chase of them. The French captain lost heart, and wanted to turn back to Ajaccio. But for Napoleon there was no backward way. As on the African coast, so now he saw only the end on which he had fixed his eyes. He was ready if need be to go off in a boat and try to land that way. Meanwhile, he ordered the course to be set to the north-east, succeeded in misleading the pursuit as to the direction of the voyage, and on the morning of the 9th of October reached safety and the shore at St. Raphael in the bay of Fréjus. The delight with which he was wel-

comed in Provence, which had been almost like his own country to him, and whose sons had shared his victories in Italy, was almost greater than that of his Corsican fellow-countrymen. Here, too, no one paid any heed to the quarantine. All crowded to see the returning soldier, to greet the chief who could save them from invasion. In Aix, where he went on the same day, new instructions from the Directory reached him. They were written under the supposition that he was still in Egypt. They suggested or at least gave permission for him to arrange a capitulation, but at the same time they conferred on him full powers for any military or political measures that his genius and the circumstances of the case might suggest to him, with a view to expediting and securing his return. In his reply he was able to tell them of the triumph of Aboukir, and assure them that Egypt was actually for the moment freed from all hostile pressure, a name of disaster changed into a name of victory, and the cypress wreath covered with laurels.[1] And now all along the road he travelled there was the same spectacle; a wild outburst of excitement wherever he came. No one asked why he had forsaken Egypt and abandoned his comrades to their fate, not even those who feared him, or envious rivals like the Directors and the Ministers. All opposition, all party spirit, disappeared in the one feeling: the Victor, the Peacebringer, the Messiah had come.

[1] *Translator's note.*—To understand the allusion it must be remembered that in France what we call the "Battle of the Nile" is known as the "Battle of Aboukir." Napoleon was able to report a victory won on the shores of the bay that had witnessed the destruction of the French fleet.

On the morning of the 24th of Vendémiaire (October 16th), the carriage in which Napoleon travelled to Paris stopped before the house in the Rue de la Victoire, in which Josephine had so long been patiently waiting for him. As Napoleon already knew from the letters of his brother Joseph, and communications which he and Lucien had made to him during the journey to Paris (for they had hurried to meet him on the way), Josephine during his absence had not improved on the reputation of her earlier days. He did not find her at home, for she too had gone to meet him, but had missed him, as he took a different road from what she expected. When she returned, she found the door closed, and had to wait a long time till her angry husband opened it. But the time was not one for tragic scenes. His aims in politics absolutely forbade him to make his domestic troubles public property, and the tears of the frail beauty, who called all her arts to her aid to appease his sense of injury, finally obtained what no adversary could have accomplished, the submission of the hero, or at least his forgiveness. Henceforth, it seems, Napoleon had never again any reason for jealousy. His position became too important for Josephine to venture to turn aside from the path of virtue. She had rather, on her own part, to overlook much in the conduct of her lord and master, and with growing anxiety strove to maintain her place as the first lady in France, until the day when political interests forced the childless woman to give place to the daughter of an emperor.

CHAPTER IV

SOLE RULER AND RESTORER OF PEACE

THE moderation and patience which Napoleon had manifested towards the lady of his heart, he next showed with regard to those who held political power in their hands. At the same time he adopted once again the line of conduct by which he had surprised the Parisians and excited their curiosity, after his return from Italy. As he had done then, he paid his first visit to his colleagues of the Institute. Accompanied by Monge and Berthollet he appeared at their meeting on the 1st of Brumaire, and modestly took his place in the midst of his confrères. On the 5th he came again and delivered an address on the scientific results of his expedition and the monuments of ancient Egypt, as well as on the Suez Canal, the traces of the ancient waterway, and the plans for restoring it. At once the savants threw all their influence into the scale on the side of their illustrious colleague. In civilian dress, but nevertheless wearing a Turkish sabre, he waited on the members of the Directory and the Ministry. Everywhere he collected information, listened, threw out, it might be, a half-significant word, but never committed himself, or fully laid bare to anyone what he had in mind. He deliberately sought to avoid giving the impression that he wished to have any

influence in the Government. When at a reception at the house of Madame Reinhard, the wife of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, someone asked him to use his good offices for him with Barras, he simply put an end to his importunities with the words: "Wherever I am, either I command, or I am silent." No party could claim him as its own, and he did not acknowledge that he belonged to any, and who had a better right than he had to act thus? Since he had cast in his lot with France, he had always kept himself on the side of that power sprung from the bosom of the Revolution, the central force, which, forming itself in the midst of contending parties, recognised and accepted from each what was in keeping with it, but cast forth whatever was opposed to it, and bowed them all to its will.

But while he was thus stalking about in the costume of Cincinnatus, it was clearer to no one than to himself that the day was come on which he must assume the part of Dion, and it was made easy enough for him. There was no party that had not counted on him, and each one of them was full of eagerness to attach him to itself and push him forward. He had, as he said long after at St. Helena, become the hinge on which conspiracies turned, with which every party was busy, and which all ran upon the overthrow of the existing constitution and the altering of a condition of public affairs that had become intolerable. The necessity of a new change in the State was obvious. Thus only, to use his own expression, could the Revolution "march on." Thus only could its work be advanced, its power assured, and peace won with victories that would guarantee it. But, as has been already

remarked, he had from the first no other idea than this, and every step he took was directed to this end. Almost as if it were an amusing sport, and with all the delight of an artist in his work, this master of intrigue spun the threads, laid out the lures, by which he hoped to draw into his toils enemies and friends, rivals and comrades, but above all the masses, the millions. Thus for instance he used Josephine's talents, which he knew all too well, in order to entrap Gohier, the President of the Directory, perhaps the most stubborn of his adversaries. With a view to luring him away from his house on the decisive day, she was to invite him to *déjeuner* that morning, and he was one of her most devoted admirers. However, the scheme was wrecked by the suspicions of the zealous Jacobin, and the invitation brought, not Gohier, but his wife, to the house in the Rue de la Victoire. That Josephine herself was not initiated into the plot did no harm ; on the contrary, she was able to play her part all the more freely.

As to the party which he was to choose, Napoleon was hardly long in doubt. The Thermidorians, whose political tendencies survived in the Jacobins of the day, had always been hostile to him, even if he could now have joined them. The men for him were those who were striving for the establishment of order without renouncing the principles of the Revolution. These were at the moment the party of Sieyès, the patriarch of the Revolution, who was all but supreme in the Council of the Elders, and could hope for a majority in the Lower Chamber, to such an extent was the opinion of the nation and the army overwhelmingly on his side. A striking proof of this was given a few days after Napoleon's return, on the

occasion of the re-election of the presidents and officials of both chambers, who were all selected in accordance with the views of Sieyès. It was especially an advantage that Lucien, Napoleon's brother, was chosen President of the Five Hundred (the lower or "younger" Chamber). He had been gradually drawn from the fiery Jacobinism of his earlier years into more moderate courses, and was one of the trusted adherents of Sieyès. Thus he was the ready-made intermediary between his brother and the leader of his party. Sieyès had had the prospect of a change in the Constitution in his mind for months, and had already sketched out his plan in all its details. His leading idea was to strengthen the executive. One cannot be quite sure what position he intended for the Legislature, and what precisely was to be its standing between the nation and the Government in the new order of things, or whether he had already made a forecast of the principles carried out in the Constitution of Brumaire, which was in great part his work. However, it would seem that as early as the summer he had planned the procedure in the general form that was carried out on the 18th and 19th of Brumaire. According to this plan, as the latest historian of the great crisis strikingly remarks, the men actually in power were to be made to carry out their self-annihilation with their own hands, and to offer up a sacrifice of the Constitution of the Year III by almost constitutional methods. Acting on the terms of three articles of the Constitution, that gave the Council of the Elders the power of removing the meeting-place of the Legislature from the capital in times of serious danger, this Chamber, which could be relied on, was to pass a resolution to this effect,

and thus deprive the Jacobins of the support of the men of the Parisian Faubourgs. It was hoped thus to force the Five Hundred also to accept the proposals which Sieyès and his partisans would bring forward.

It was a plan that showed how completely France had changed. Till now all the critical days of the Revolution had been decided in the capital itself; in the days of the full tide of the Revolution by revolt, and since the day of Prairial by armed forces acting against the mob—but always on the pavements of Paris. Every attempt made by the King's government and by all those who had tried to stop the destructive course of the Revolution, to remove the executive and the National Assembly outside the barriers of the Capital, had utterly failed. It was a proof of the strength which the new order of things had gained in France, that now one of the patriarchs of the Revolution, nay he who had almost begun it, should take this risk and hope thus to gain his ends by almost legal methods and without having recourse to violence. All the same, it could not be carried through without a show of force. The power on which Sieyès and his party could rely must at least be in evidence. For success they could not dispense with the support of some general who had the army behind him. In the summer, Sieyès had thought of Joubert for this part, and it was with this view he was sent against Suvaroff; victory over the enemies of France was to give the young and brilliant general the prestige he was to use against opponents at home. After Novi, Sieyès counted on Macdonald, but he despised the part or would not take the risks. Finally, as late as October, Sieyès was thinking of

making the attempt with Moreau, who had come back from the Army of the Rhine, and was now very friendly to him. But then came tidings of Napoleon's return, and once he was in France all thought of employing any other sword must be abandoned. The expression "Il est trop tard," used by Sieyès with reference to Moreau, when he heard of Napoleon's landing near Fréjus (by the way, the Abbé's own birthplace), showed how clear was his view of the situation, and that henceforth he would count only on Napoleon, though probably not without a certain amount of anxiety. Yet it was some time before they both came to an understanding. It is true Napoleon heard of Sieyès's views from his brother almost immediately, expressed his general approval of them, and told Lucien to express his thanks for the confidence reposed in him. He thought Sieyès was right; France needed a government of concentrated strength; three Consuls would be better than five Directors; thus he himself had set up three Consuls at Genoa, and wanted to have only three as the number of the Directors at Milan. He expressed himself also as opposed to the Law of Hostages and the forced loan. "I side," he said, "with the Council of the Elders. I am ready to serve as a shield for the wise men of the Republic against the revolt of the Faubourgs, just as I served as a shield for the Convention against the revolt of the Royalist Sections in Vendémiaire." But then he declined to make any nearer approach, and would pledge himself to nothing definite until he had explored the ground. So he paid his formal visit to Sieyès, as well as to the other Directors, but in public he held aloof from him, and even arranged that at a

dinner given by the Director Gohier, Josephine, in friendly conversation with the lady of the house, should complain that Sieyès also had been invited, for she knew that her husband could not bear him. Napoleon said to himself that he could always have the Abbé on his side, merely by acting himself with a certain reserve, and being content for a while to be overshadowed by the other's dignity as a Director and the leader of a party. He even thought it well to keep up relations with the opponents of Sieyès, especially with Barras, his old friend and protector. It is possible that, as Barras himself relates, in order to gain his confidence, Napoleon, amongst other matters, complained to him of his disillusions regarding Josephine. He had no difficulty in coming to an understanding with Moreau, possibly because he allowed him to suppose that he would have some prospect of commanding the army, in case he himself came into power. But he also found means to arrive at an agreement to some extent with the Jacobin generals, Jourdan, Augereau and Bernadotte. Shortly before the *coup d'état*, he obtained from Jourdan a promise of neutrality. Augereau, who was always a mere loud talker, was secured without trouble. The most doubtful was Bernadotte, who had shortly before been Minister of War, and had for some time regarded himself as a rival of Napoleon. But he too was not a man of initiative ; and above all, these generals, though having their groups of supporters, had not any of the troops at their back. They were little more than leaders of parties in the Chambers. A pronunciamento, a split in the army, or even in the Paris garrison, was not to be thought of. Not only the troops, but their officers

also, were at Napoleon's beck, and above all Lefèbvre, who commanded the military division of Paris, Admiral Bruix, the Minister of Marine, Colonel Sebastiani, a Corsican in command of the 9th Dragoons, who had fought in Italy; and his comrades in arms Lannes, Berthier, Macdonald, Serrurier, who since the campaigns of Italy and Egypt had linked their fortune with Napoleon's. In the Ministry and in the Chambers too he found friends and helpers. Above all there were Talleyrand, on whom he at once counted in the highest degree, and who came to his aid more thoroughly than anyone else; and Fouché, whose influence as Minister of Police and whose talents as a conspirator, made him at once indispensable and dangerous. Napoleon therefore at the outset initiated him gradually into his secrets, but to the last did not take him fully into his confidence, while Fouché on his side, through old inclinations and habits, took care to keep a little back door open for retreat. Then there were Roederer, Boulay de la Meurthe, Cambacérès, the Minister of Justice, and other members of the centre party. The less fully he showed his hand, the more plain were others with him. The nearer the crisis came, the greater were the numbers of partisans on his side, deserters to his cause, or at least neutrals. When he stepped to the front, power would be beckoning at his side, and whoever hoped to secure his own interests must make haste to fall into the ranks behind him. Napoleon alone could afford to wait.

A first indication of the direction in which the General would shape his course was contained in an inspired note in the newspapers of the 2nd of Bru-

maire, on a visit he had paid to the Director Sieyès and his adherent the Director Ducos. After this, Napoleon again took refuge in silence, so far as Sieyès was concerned, and it was not until the evening of the 10th of Brumaire, fourteen days after his return, that they both met for a conference at Lucien's house. It lasted only an hour, but it was decisive for the business in hand. Napoleon did almost all the talking. Sieyès had begun to explain his plan for the new Constitution. The General at once interrupted him; he knew all that through his brother; clearly Sieyès could not think of giving France a ready-made Constitution, without its being discussed in detail, article by article; now this could not be the work of a moment, and they had no time to waste. It would be necessary to have a provisional government, which would itself assume power on the day of the change, and a Legislative Commission, which would draw up the future Constitution and submit it to a popular vote. He approved of the transfer of the Chambers to St. Cloud, declared himself ready to become a member of the provisional government, but gave no pledge for the future. Indeed, if we may rely on Lucien's account of the conference, he further left Sieyès in doubt whether, on the whole, he would like to be a member of the definite government, or be content with the command of one of the armies. We may take it that he acted as he had done in his negotiations with the Italians and the Austrians. These at first had also been merely "provisional,"—but secured the advantages won by his sword. The main point was to obtain the control of the Government; Sieyès himself must grant this; and the Abbé's reforms and

the strengthening of the executive would be a later result. So long as the executive was in the hands of parties and the object of debates in the Chambers, Bonaparte himself, with all his power, had nothing solid to rely on, and ran the risk of failure, or of being subjected to a government over which he would have no influence. He provided against all this by putting forward the alternative that either his proposal of a provisional government should be accepted, or they were no longer to count on him. As in his battles, he directed all his energy to the winning of the commanding point. Once he had the plenary powers of the legislature in his hands, and its members had, at the same time, compromised themselves, he could reckon upon being sure of a decisive influence in the shaping of the new Constitution, and a commission formed of members of both chambers, and full of his own adherents, would not be dangerous. In a word, he had the logic of facts and power on his side. Sieyès was too acute to misunderstand the situation. "The General," he said to Lucien after Napoleon had left them, "seems to be just as much at home here as on the battlefield. We must act on his opinion. If he were to draw back, all would be lost. Only his acceptance of the provisional consulate will secure success."

The next days were devoted to preparations, which took longer than had been anticipated. There was not another meeting till after the state banquet which both Chambers gave to Napoleon and Moreau together on the 15th of Brumaire. The second conference took place at night, and again at Lucien's house. Sieyès had already prepared everything with his friends, and brought with him the draft of the

decrees of the Council of Elders, removing the legislative body to St. Cloud, transferring the command of the troops to Napoleon, and establishing the Consulate in a provisional form. Napoleon agreed to everything, and also to a proposal that instead of there being a single Commission, the drawing up of the Constitution should be entrusted to two Commissions of twenty-five members from each Chamber. He only showed opposition on one point, namely a suggestion that at St. Cloud a number of the more dangerous Jacobins should be excluded from the sitting. That he would not hear of this being done was not merely a sign of his consciousness of his own power, but it also showed the idea he had formed of his mission and of the inner tendency of his policy. He did not want to be merely a man of a party, but the man for France. He counted on bringing even the Jacobins, as well as their opponents, to serve the State, as soon as he had it under his control.

And so the tragi-comedy of the 18th of Brumaire (November 9th) was played out nearly as the stage managers had arranged it. Everything went like clockwork. At seven in the morning the Council of the Elders met in its assembly hall in the Tuileries. The decree for the removal to St. Cloud was accepted unanimously and without a debate, and to Bonaparte was entrusted the carrying out of the resolution. As a justification for it, it was alleged that there was a conspiracy of the Revolutionary party, against which the Republic must be safeguarded. Meanwhile, Napoleon was waiting at his house with his generals and staff-officers, and there the two Inspectors of the Chamber brought him the news. Surrounded by a brilliant staff, and

with the commandant of Paris at his side, he rode across the Place de la Concorde to the Tuileries, greeted enthusiastically by the troops, and in a friendly way by the crowd, who saluted him as the "Liberator." It would be about half-past nine when he entered the old palace of the kings. With his officers he appeared before the representatives of the nation to make the declaration which the resolution of the Chamber required of him. The oath he took was not to the existing Constitution. "You have given the orders," he said, "which the welfare of the State demands. Our arms will secure their execution. We desire a Republic based upon true liberty, the freedom of the citizen, and upon the sacred principles of national representation. I swear it, in my own name and in that of my comrades." Civil freedom, prosperity at home, victory and peace, these were the words with which he harangued the troops when he reviewed them in the Tuileries gardens. Sieyès and Ducos had meanwhile come over from the Luxembourg, the palace of the Directory. Barras, completely taken by surprise and neither capable of nor inclined to make any resistance, had remained behind. there, and had merely sent his secretary, Bottot, with a letter to the General. Bottot arrived during the review. Napoleon took advantage of the occasion to make his famous speech, which was addressed in words of thunder partly to Bottot, partly to his soldiers. He laid at the door of Barras and his accomplices the defeats and internal troubles of their native land and the deaths of a hundred thousand of the comrades of his glory. Barras now saw that he had lost the game; and when about noon Talleyrand and Bruix came and spread out before him a draft

form of resignation, which they had drawn up during the night, he signed it without a word of protest. Gohier and Moulin were more difficult to deal with. They took refuge in passive resistance, but had to submit to be kept prisoners in their own palace. Moreau did not disdain to make himself their prison-warder. After all this, Bonaparte, when he returned home in the evening, had good reason for the expression which Bourrienne says he heard him use; "It did not go badly to-day; we shall see something more to-morrow."

Nevertheless, next day there came a moment that threatened to unsettle everything. According to the programme the Chambers had met at noon at St. Cloud, the Elders in the Hall of Apollo, at the top of a staircase in the right wing of the palace, the Five Hundred in the Orangerie on the ground floor. Their own guard surrounded the palace, but were in their turn surrounded by the most reliable of the troops of the line, under Sebastiani's command. And now in both assemblies there arose very serious complications. In the Council of the Elders a number of members complained that on the day before they had received no summons to attend. Among the Five Hundred the Jacobins threw themselves at once into the conflict. They moved and forced through a resolution that before the debates began each of the members should take the oath to the Constitution. There were cries of "Down with the Dictators! We are freemen here! Bayonets do not frighten us!" Napoleon, who with his staff had taken up his quarters in a room on the first floor, not far from the hall where the Elders were assembled, waited for a couple of hours. But as the uproar did

not cease and more and more alarming reports reached him, he said, "There must be an end of this!" and, accompanied by some officers, went into the Chamber of the Elders. He evidently hoped to produce an effect there by his appearance and his words. Agitated, halting in his speech, suffering as he was from nervous irritation, he protested against the accusation that he wanted to play the part of a Cæsar or a Cromwell. He spoke of the dangers that menaced all, of the Republic left without guidance, and with only the Council of the Elders standing fast. They must act. Let them speak; he was there to carry out their orders. "Let us save Liberty! let us save Equality!" It was almost the same thing that he had said to the Assembly the day before, and it was in accord with his own designs. Again the word that everyone had on his tongue was left out. But a voice from among the assembled members supplied it—"And the Constitution!" someone called out to the General. It was the watchword of conflict. It was not possible to pretend not to have heard it, and Napoleon had no idea of such a subterfuge. A moment he paused and then broke out again: "The Constitution? You yourselves have brought it to naught. You violated it on the 18th of Fructidor, you violated it on the 22nd of Floréal and on the 30th of Prairial! No one regards it any longer. I will speak out," and so he went on with his invective; he told how factious men had knocked at his door, told him their terrible secrets,—those accomplices in murder and pillage who longed to put an end to all liberal ideas. Once more he urged the Council of the Elders to action. Once more he protested against his calumniators. "If I am a

traitor, be ye all Brutuses. . . . I declare that as soon as this is ended, I will be no more in the Republic than the arm that will keep standing what you have set up." But now his opponents were no longer silent. They called for names, and when Bonaparte named Barras and Moulin, they demanded a commission of inquiry. In vain his friends tried to come to the aid of the General, who felt that he was being driven into a corner. He further entangled himself in high-sounding phrases and generalities and finally withdrew from the discussion, which was becoming more and more angry, and left the hall. Without much delay he now proceeded to the Orangerie where the Five Hundred were debating, and this time, there can hardly be a doubt, with the intention of provoking a conflict, or with the feeling that it was impending. There is an indication of this in the escort he took with him, which included besides Lefèbvre, Murat and other officers, four grenadiers of the Legislative Guard. In any case this was the result of his action. What the Radicals had foreseen, what they had so loudly protested against, they now saw before their eyes,—the Dictatorship, the bayonets. There was no choice for them ; they must submit or make a struggle. They still had the advantage of numbers. The grenadiers had halted at the door, and the General, breaking away from his escort—as if he were on the bridge of Arcola—had advanced towards the tribune. Suddenly he found himself surrounded by his opponents. An indescribable scene followed. With wild cries of "*A bas le dictateur! A bas le tyran! Hors la loi!*" they rushed upon him. Hustled, pressed upon, struck, beside himself and almost fainting, he retreated towards the door,

where his comrades received him and escorted him out.

"*Hors la loi!*"[1] That death-bringing outcry of the Revolution, which had like lightning hurled Robespierre from the height of his power, rang in the ears of the soldier, the victor of Vendémiaire, the hero "whom the god of victory and fortune accompanied," he in whom the nation had hailed its deliverer. No words could more fully show the utter hopelessness of the attack upon him. The Jacobins might kill Napoleon if they meant to make him harmless to them. But how would that have helped them? They would have cut off the head of the hydra, and a hundred others would have grown up in its stead. They had in fact nothing to oppose to him, but their words and a Constitution that was a worthless piece of paper, which they themselves (nothing could be truer) had so often torn to shreds. And the results of such a victory? Anarchy, the helplessness and disorganisation of the State, to which the great conqueror alone could guarantee order, unity, and peace. As some of the resolutions proposed after Napoleon's exit show, they still hoped to withdraw their guard, the grenadiers, from the command of the Usurper, and so to bring about a rupture between the two bodies of troops surrounding them. As a matter of fact the grenadiers did show some hesitation when Napoleon came out into the courtyard, mounted a horse, and riding through their ranks tried to excite them and the soldiers of the line, by telling them of the attack on him, of the daggers with which he had been threatened. The account of the affair which

[1] i.e. "Outlawry."

Lucien gives in his Memoirs is however an exaggeration. Assailed by the same turbulent crowd, he had meanwhile abandoned his post as President of the Chamber, and appeared beside his brother, and he says that it was his appearance on the scene and his words that brought the waverers into line. His authority as President may indeed have influenced the Legislative Guard, and perhaps too the theatrical conduct so often attributed to him later, his placing a sword at his brother's breast and swearing like Brutus to strike him down at once if he proved to be a betrayer of Liberty. But assuredly what produced more effect on the grenadiers than all the tirades of the two brothers, or any other consideration, was the pressure exercised on them by the troops of the line, by whom they were surrounded, and who, urged on by their officers, had no other thought but to avenge the chief they loved and admired on those prating fellows, the civilians. So now it was the appointed guardians of the National Assembly themselves, who with drums beating and in a closely formed column, forced their way into the hall where it was in session. Then there was soon an end of the debate. Protesting and shouting, but without making the slightest attempt at resistance, the representatives of the nation, mingled with the public from the galleries, went jumping out of the low windows into the garden, which was already darkening with the twilight of the November evening.

The play was over. The second act had not gone exactly according to the plans of the stage managers, but after all the result was not different from what they had anticipated. After nightfall the Council of the Elders, and a couple of dozen members of

the Five Hundred (who had remained behind or were brought back, and who met under Lucien's presidency on the very scene of their disaster), voted the decrees according to the programme. The appointment of Bonaparte and the two Directors, Sieyès and Ducos, as provisional Consuls, the nomination of the two Commissions to draw up the Constitution, the adjournment of the Chambers, the expulsion of sixty-two members who had more openly compromised themselves, the swearing in of Bonaparte and his two colleagues—all was carried out without a hitch. And while the troops marched back to the Paris which had remained perfectly quiet—the grenadiers singing the Revolutionary song *Ça ira !*—Napoleon drew up a proclamation to the nation, in which he described the *coup d'état* as a victory of Liberal ideals, ensuring their safety and preservation. Towards morning he too went back to Paris with Sieyès, Lucien, and one of the generals in the carriage with him. As he bade good-bye to his companions he said to them—"Good morning! We have been pulling down—we must now build, and build solidly."

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But things did not move so quickly as he perhaps expected. It took five weeks before the main lines of the Constitution were drafted, and carefully as the Commissioners had been chosen, Napoleon had enough to do to bring their opinions into agreement with his own, or, when he could not succeed in this, to thrust them aside. But at last he reached a result that fitted in well enough with his own ideas and the situation of affairs. He took much from the draft

Constitution prepared by Sieyès, which served as the basis of the discussions in both Commissions, as well as from suggestions made either during the sittings, or in more private meetings of his friends, by men like Daunou, Boulay de la Meurthe, Roederer and others. But all the same he would often completely alter the sense of a proposed draft, and he stamped on every article of the new Constitution the mark of his own individuality. When complex debates arose, and the Commissioners took too independent a view, and seemed likely to drift away from the lines he had marked out, he brusquely intervened and convened a united meeting of both Commissions under his own presidency in his salon at the Luxembourg Palace, where he had gone to reside with his colleagues after the *coup d'état*. At once everything went as he wished. All was finished in ten or twelve days, or nights—for Napoleon would not rest, and kept hard at work while the Commissioners were overcome with weariness, and even when he himself became ill. At the close he worked all alone with three or four of his most trusted adherents. In a few hours he dictated the final draft to Roederer, and laid it before the Commission in such a way that they had now nothing to do but submissively accept whatever was prescribed to them.

As we have seen, Napoleon had found himself in agreement with Sieyès as to the idea of strengthening the Executive, and bringing it into closer touch with the national will. In fact, so far as ideals went, everything was made to depend on the sovereignty of the people, not merely through the *Appel au peuple*, the Plebiscite, that was at the outset to give its sanction to the Constitution, but also by the whole organisation of the executive being penetrated with

the principles of democracy. The basis of Sieyès' proposal, which Napoleon adopted, was the drawing up of a register of citizens that would almost extend to universal suffrage. By the votes of these a second list of so-called "Notables" was to be drawn up, on which also the names of all local authorities would find a place. These Notables would then elect the departmental councils, and these would choose five thousand so-called "Notables of the Nation," the procedure being that they would come together in groups of ten, and each group would choose one as its elected representative. The Five Thousand thus chosen formed the body, from amongst whose members the representative assembly and the central administration were to be selected. But they themselves were to have no voice in the selection; a board with sovereign power over them, an irremovable highly salaried commission of eighty officials was to have the right of choosing the national representative assembly, without however, be it noted, having power to go outside the circle of the five thousand candidates. This board was the Constitutional "Jury," the central organisation of the whole scheme, the special embodiment of Sieyès' idea that confidence must come from below, but power from those in higher station. In the hands of the Jury was thus placed the formation (one can hardly call it the election) of both the Chambers, which Sieyès had made a part of his system—the Tribunate which was to draft and discuss proposed laws, and the Corps Législatif which was to pass or reject them without debate. But the Jury did not form the top of the pyramid. At its summit was a single person, the Grand Elector, who was to have a salary

of six million francs, to be protected by his own guards, to reside in the old palace of the kings at Versailles, and to enjoy almost royal honours. It was to be his business to elect two consuls, of whom one would have in his department diplomatic relations, the army and the navy, and the other the whole internal administration of the country. Both were to have the right of choosing all their chief assistants for their work from the list of Notables. There were, therefore, as it was strikingly remarked, two smaller pyramids inside the main pyramid, and resting on the same base, but each self-contained and having no direct connection with the other. Finally, to take away from the Grand Elector, the consuls, and all other prominent officials, any possibility of abusing their powers, Sieyès had also given his Jury the right of "absorption," that is, they could as it were "swallow up" any one of them by simply transferring him to membership of their own body, without being in any way called to account for such action.

Taken altogether it was a work worthy of this great artist in Constitutions and of his logical powers. The pity was only that it could not come to life, for it had no life in it, and seemed to have been expressly constructed to keep in suspense any power it could develop, and condemn it to inactivity by a system of counterpoises fixed all round it. The whole was a huge feat of juggling. And it was a piece of stupidity, for this Constitution proposed to fetter with the cobwebs of its paragraphs the strong man to whom it owed its very existence. Its purpose must be the same as his, to give scope for the unimpeded development of his powers. Strong as

he was, he could not content himself either with the Consulate for foreign or that for internal affairs, or even with the post of Grand Elector, but only with some arrangement that would place in his hands the whole might of the State. He poured his open contempt upon these "political metaphysics," on that "royal lounger," that "fatted pig" (*cochon d'engrais*) of a Grand Elector. He substituted for this functionary the exact opposite, a First Consul, in whom all was to be energy and force, instead of a Grand Elector, who would be a dull heavy mass that could create nothing and only act as a check on others. The First Consul —and that Napoleon himself would have the position was so obvious that it was hardly open to discussion —holding office for ten years, was to promulgate the laws, appoint and dismiss at his pleasure the members of the Council of State, the ministers, the ambassadors, and other important agents abroad, the officers of the army and navy, the members of local administrations. He was to appoint, without right of his decision being revised, all the judges of the civil and criminal courts, except the judges of the Court of Appeal and the local magistracy. In other acts of the Government the Second and Third Consuls were to have a consultative voice, but the final decision rested with the First Consul. A financial Budget was provided for, but the Government was to prepare and propose it, and the legislative body was simply to accept or reject it *en bloc*. It was settled that the ministers were to countersign the official acts of their departments, and be responsible for them; but for the senators, legislators, tribunes, consuls, and state-councillors there was no such responsibility, and the members of the Government could be brought before

a court only in virtue of a resolution of the Council of State. In a word, it was a Dictatorship, hardly masked by a few forms and formulas. The full powers which the Convention had temporarily delegated to the Committee of Public Safety were now concentrated in the hands of the one man.

The instrument through which Napoleon hoped to set this colossal power in action was the Council of State, a group of experts depending immediately on the First Consul, who were to prepare the drafts of the laws, act as the advocates of these proposals in the legislative assemblies, and arrange for their being put in force. Its functions thus made it a kind of revival of the Committee of Public Safety, and, like it, it was divided into a number of sub-committees, but always under the condition that every one of its acts was subject to the dictation and the absolute authority of the supreme magistrate. This was the central organ in Napoleon's Constitutional scheme, as diametrically opposed to what had held the same place in the project of Sieyès, as the First Consul was to his Grand Elector. As for the rest, Napoleon kept close enough to Sieyès' proposals, at least as to their form, and, to some extent, as to their essentials. Instead of the Jury there was a Senate, like it in scope of action, emoluments, and other external matters. There were the Tribunate and the Corps Législatif. But throughout the bolts and cross-bars had been removed that would have hindered the movement of the machine, and prevented its being controlled by the lever that was in the grasp of Napoleon's hand. With this view, while the powers of the two last-named bodies were modelled on the project of Sieyès, the Senate was deprived of some of the essential functions of the Jury.

It was especially in the methods followed in bringing the new order of things into active existence that Napoleon followed the plans proposed by his colleague. For Sieyès too had never had any intention of letting the lists of the Notables be the immediate work of the electorate, and so placing in the hands of the people the nomination of the whole official hierarchy. This was no more intended than it had been in the case of every former *coup d'état* of the Revolution. On the contrary—and in this the old theorist had shown that he was an experienced practitioner—he had laid special stress on the idea that the first building up of the new constitutional order and its organisation must be carried out by himself and his friends, so that thus the new spirit might be gradually infused from above into the French people. Then the danger of agitations arising, enemies becoming active, unfriendly elements finding their way into the new organisation of the State, must be avoided, and the creators of the Constitution and their friends assured of power. This also expressed Napoleon's wishes, with the difference that here again he thought less than Sieyès of the members of the latter's party. This was because he himself belonged to no party, and his friends were all those who were willing to work under him for the welfare and the advancement of France, let them come from whatever quarter they pleased. They were all welcome—Royalists, who had borne arms against their native country; priests, who had roused the peasants of La Vendée against the Republic, and who even yet refused to take the oath to the church of the Revolution; the Girondists and the like, whose ideals were the unfettering of individual and political

freedom ; as well as the adherents of the first Constitution down to Lafayette and Lameth themselves ; all whom the Revolution in its destructive course had thrust aside, whose property had been ruined or confiscated, whose names had been dishonoured ; whose brothers and fathers had fallen under the guillotine. "I am opening," said Napoleon in his proclamation, "a broad road, in which there will be room for all"—only they must be friends of peace and order, and accept the system under which the will of the one man counted.

It was to be taken for granted too that the fundamental changes produced by the Revolution, changes on which Napoleon's system itself rested, must be recognised by them all. There was an end for ever of privileges and privileged bodies. The door was open for those who had belonged to the old feudal caste, but at the cost of feudalism itself. They must cast away from them the ideas for which they had gone into exile. Equality before the nation was to be a principle for them also. If Liberty means self-government, this was henceforth altogether banished from France. But freedom of action within certain limits, and equality under the rule of one, was assured to all. And this was the truth set forth in a sentence of the proclamation which Napoleon addressed to the nation on the 15th of December, 1799, on the eve of a new century : "Citizens ! The Revolution has gone back to its first principles, from which it started. It has reached its end."

So on the 7th of February, 1800, the nation confirmed the authority of the First Consul by the plebiscite, in which by three million votes against fifteen hundred it gave its sanction to the new

Constitution, and at the same time to the whole organisation it had created. Granted that further precautions and an anxiety about their own position on the part of those in power are to be traced in the drawing up of the regulations for taking the Vote, which was to be given merely by writing down *Yes* or *No*, without any previous discussion, or any meetings of the electors being convened; none the less the will of the overwhelming majority of the French people found expression in the Vote. For the moment the new Government was what it claimed to be, the will of France concentrated at its centre. That *impérieuse unité des pouvoirs* which Mirabeau, in December, 1790, had pointed out to King Louis XVI as what the nation most ardently longed for, had been obtained and firmly established. The essential change that the Revolution had made in French Society found its expression in the plebiscite.

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We have seen that Napoleon on his return from the East was received by the nation as the bringer of peace, and so far as France itself was concerned he had justified this faith in him. Factious parties had been broken up. The peasants of La Vendée and Brittany, too, had made peace in presence of the alternative put before them of, on the one hand, destruction, on the other submission and permission for their priests to return. The Bourse had greeted the *coup d'état* with a general rise of prices on the 19th of Brumaire itself. Capital, kept anxiously shut up for years, began to be again available. Provisional, and to some extent arbitrary, but on the

whole well-directed measures of financial administration provided some millions for the State treasury, and obviated the bankruptcy that had threatened it. But all this had not brought about what must be the basis of order and repose and of the advancement of the country's prosperity, namely, peace with foreign Powers. France was no more alone in the world than she had been in 1793. Europe was in conflict with her, and had been victorious over her. Italy was almost lost. The English were in possession of its coasts. Only in the Alps and south of the Genoese Apennines could the French armies still maintain themselves. General Brune's victory in the late autumn had somewhat relieved the pressure on Holland, but Corfu was actually, and Malta and Egypt as good as, lost. Could it be expected that the Powers which after suffering so many defeats had at last obtained important advantages would agree to a peace, that is to say, to such terms of peace as would be consonant with feeling in France, and adequate to the as yet hardly diminished strength of her arms? For it was only such a peace as this that Napoleon could venture to conclude, one that would afford the prospect of safeguarding his work at home, and would accord with his own past, his consciousness of power, his pride, and his genius. In other words, we may ask if he was in earnest with the peace proposals which he had made to England and Austria before the close of 1799? This has been as often asserted as denied, and quite recently in a special study of the question it has been argued that this step on the part of the First Consul was taken in all sincerity. Now it is plain that both the letters which he wrote to these hostile Powers, letters adorned with a full

display of Napoleonic phraseology, had also in view the parties in France, and were intended to give them some proof that it was not his fault if the enemy refused his proffered hand. And further, he had too correct an eye for the realities of the situation to believe at this moment in the possibility of a peace of the kind that was necessary for him. For this very reason he had omitted to make any precise statement whatever as to the conditions of peace. But all this need not hinder us from believing that his policy included a readiness for peace. He wished to have it because it most closely concerned his own interests; but he knew that he would not now obtain it. In fact, the answer of the two cabinets was exactly what he must have foreseen. Pitt directly refused; Thugut used ambiguous phrases that came to the same thing. There was no other way; Napoleon must conquer peace for his people.

And so came about the campaign of Marengo.

Its whole course depended on the fact that through the victory of Zurich, and the disasters to Suvaroff's army, Switzerland had remained in the hands of the French. Thus the Alpine roads from the Rhine to Italy were in their possession. Napoleon's plan now was that the Army of the Rhine under Moreau should push forward through the Black Forest, and secure also the passes of the Tyrol. Then a Reserve Army, the formation of which had been begun at Lyons, reinforced by a corps detached from Moreau's army, was to be sent to Northern Italy, and there co-operate with Masséna, who still held the Genoese Apennines against the Austrians. Napoleon himself had remained in Paris, and Berthier had taken

command of the Reserve Army. But in the beginning of May bad news from Italy led Napoleon to decide to take the field himself, and immediately to begin operations in the direction of Italy. The Austrians had broken through the line of the Apennines, and were in possession of the Riviera as far as Nice, a French corps had been driven back to the Var, and Masséna had been forced back upon Genoa, where he was completely invested by an Austrian army and an English fleet. What had been a danger in 1796, and what Napoleon's victories in that year had saved France from, namely, the co-operation of the Austrians and English on the Italian coast, and an invasion through the Alps, was now becoming an actual fact. He resolved to push forward from Dijon with the Reserve Army without waiting to complete its organisation (for there was no time for delay), and reach Lombardy by the shortest possible way. It was the Pass over the Great St. Bernard that he chose. It would hardly be barred by the enemy, for nothing was further from their expectations than that Napoleon would break through at this point. In seven days, with favourable weather, and with hardly any accidents, the infantry, part of the artillery, the horses, and baggage, were got over the difficult mountain paths and down into the valley of Aosta. The rest of the army completed the passage a couple of days later, after the capitulation of the little fort of Bard, the only defence of the valley. On the 2nd of June, the First Consul entered Milan. Here he was joined by the corps sent to him over the St. Gothard Pass by Moreau, who had already won his first victories on the southern slopes of the Black Forest. Masséna, however, could no longer be succoured. He

was forced to capitulate on the 4th of June, when Napoleon's advanced troops had already reached the Po. But at the head of sixty thousand men, and interposing between the divided forces of the Austrians, Napoleon might well believe that he had victory already in his hands. His idea was to cut off the enemy's retreat, crush him wherever encountered, and force him to enter into a capitulation. The plan proved a complete success. The Po was easily crossed on the 9th of June, a hostile force was broken up near Montebello and driven back to the river Scrivia. On the 12th, the corps of Lannes, Victor, and Desaix (who had just returned from Egypt) had reached Tortona. When, on the 13th, they came into contact with a detachment of the enemy near Marengo, the latter after a slight engagement retired across the Scrivia. Napoleon did not in the least believe that the enemy meant to make a stand here. Already, on the 13th, he had divided his forces to feel for the enemy in various directions, when suddenly, on the morning of the 14th, Lannes and Victor were attacked by the Austrians in strong force and soon were being everywhere driven back. In vain Napoleon threw into the fight whatever troops he had at hand. The retirement could not be checked, and the Austrians were completely victorious, when Desaix, recalled by messengers sent in haste, arrived with his division intact, and, supported by a charge of Kellerman's cavalry, won back to his chief the fleeting fortune of the day. Such was the great battle of Marengo which changed the whole situation. The Austrians, dispersed and divided, threw up the game. They agreed to a capitulation, which secured them a free retreat, but made the French masters of all the

country from the Mincio to Nice, with all its fortresses. It was not Napoleon who had led the troops to victory, but his subordinate general, Desaix, who was killed in the fight. It was difficult for Napoleon to accept such a situation, and for long after the official accounts of the battle completely misrepresented what had occurred. There is no doubt that but for Desaix he would have been a beaten man, and most likely ruined. Nevertheless, one can no more challenge his right to the laurels of Marengo than Moltke's to the laurels of Gravelotte, though there too the right wing behind which he and the king were posted was driven back. For after all it was Napoleon whose orders Desaix obeyed when he came back to the battlefield and fell upon the enemy. And above all his was the decisive idea, that plan inspired by genius, of leading the army over the wild mountains and bringing it right into the middle of the dispersed enemy's positions.

The First Consul spent only a short time at Milan, reorganising the government of the Cisalpine Republic and settling the affairs of Italy. He was in a hurry to get back to France, where matters were still somewhat unsettled. By the beginning of June he returned to Paris.

At the theatre of war there was an armistice. Like Napoleon in Italy, so Moreau in Germany, after having driven the enemy back beyond Ulm, had granted them an armistice on the 18th of July at Parsdorf. It was later prolonged to November. Napoleon had conceded this truce to the conquered enemy, with a view to the conclusion of peace. He had already sent from Milan to the Emperor Francis a second letter, in which he offered him the conditions

of Campo Formio. The result was the actual drawing up of preliminaries of peace, and when these were not ratified at Vienna there were further negotiations which Cobenzl in person carried on with the First Consul and Talleyrand at Paris. But once more the Court of Vienna could not make up its mind to leave Italy in the hands of France. So hostilities began again in November. Moreau, who had already occupied Bavaria as far as the River Isar, and had pushed columns of his troops far into the Alpine valleys of the Tyrol, inflicted a crushing defeat on the last Austrian army that had crossed the Isar to oppose him, at Hohenlinden on the 3rd of December, 1800; while in Italy the lines of the Mincio and the Adige were forced by Napoleon's generals. It was the end. Austria's power was broken, and so on the 9th of February, 1801, peace was signed at Lunéville, whither the negotiations had been transferred from Paris. The treaty was that of Campo Formio, with some additions. Austria retained what she had occupied in Venetia, but abandoned the rest of Italy. The Cisalpine territory was enlarged by the annexation of Modena and the Legations. The Grand Duke of Tuscany, too, lost his dominions, and, like the Duke of Modena, was to receive compensation in Germany. The Rhine throughout its whole course became once more the frontier of France on the side of Germany, and the principle was accepted of compensating the states that thus lost their possessions on the left bank of the Rhine by secularising and handing over to them the territories of the Prince Bishoprics on the right bank, which also increased French influence in Germany. Napoleon's demands also secured another result, the removal from the

Austrian Ministry of Baron von Thugut, who had been the soul of the Coalition. It was characteristic of his policy, and a proceeding that was repeated on the occasion of other treaties of peace. On the 6th of March the German Emperor ratified the treaty. Three weeks later Ferdinand of Naples also made his peace with the master of Italy. He had to resign to France his claims to the island of Elba and the Principality of Piombino; close his harbours against English ships; and agree to receive at Taranto, and furnish supplies for, a French army corps that was to be sent on to Egypt, where the French were still holding out. The negotiations that were brought to a successful result with Spain had a close connection with this rearrangement of the affairs of Italy. Already, on the 1st of October, by the Convention of San Ildefonso, Napoleon had once more attached to France the Court of Madrid, where, under the influence of his victories, the French party, led by Godoy, had again come into power. It was intended to provide an Italian kingdom for the Infanta, who had married the Prince of Parma, even though the latter had been among the opponents of France. At Lunéville the Grand Duchy of Tuscany was selected for this purpose. In return Spain resigned to France her claims on Elba as well as Parma, and ceded to her her colony on the Mississippi, Louisiana. And further, Portugal, though it lay under the guns of the English ships, and besides was out of Napoleon's reach, bound itself to proclaim a breach with England and close its harbours too against the English flag.

England was isolated. Unassailable on the waves, mistress of the Mediterranean, and since September also in possession of Malta, the nation that held com-

mand of the sea nevertheless saw every port from Ancona to the Texel in the power of her formidable rival. And the moment seemed to have arrived when the whole Continent would turn against the Mistress of the Seas. For the most embittered opponent of the Revolution—Russia—seemed about to ally herself with her conqueror. It was the Czar Paul I, the son of Catherine, and the Protector of the Order of Malta, who was preparing, in concert with the ruler of Western Europe, to make an effort to wrest the Trident from the island nation. Even before his recent expedition to Italy, Napoleon had offered to cede to the Russian Autocrat, as soon as peace was concluded, Malta, the stronghold of the Mediterranean, which since the Battle of the Nile had been blockaded by the English, and was thus completely out of his own power. It was a master-stroke of his diplomacy, and a political combination that opened a very wide prospect to him, for it brought in sight the possibility of striking a death-blow at the hereditary enemy of France without having to cross the sea. One may indeed say that never in Napoleon's career was there another moment that brought him nearer to the final goal of his ambition. For not only Russia, but all the neutral Powers, were preparing to follow the course of his policy. It was their very neutrality that he claimed to defend against England; the freedom of their flags which England, he asserted, would not allow. In December, Denmark and Sweden concluded a treaty of Armed Neutrality with Russia, and at Copenhagen warlike preparations were in progress for the closing of the Sound against England. Even Prussia, more than ever drawn to French policy by the cession of the secularised territories, almost

abandoned the neutral attitude she had so far scrupulously observed, when in the last days of March she occupied Hanover, and thus threatened to bring the mouths of the German rivers flowing into the North Sea under the same system. And meanwhile views were being exchanged between Paris and St. Petersburg as to fantastic schemes for marching on India and thus obtaining the dominion of the East—schemes which, however, in the existing situation of affairs, did not seem quite impossible.

Then a terrible event destroyed these far-reaching combinations. On the 24th of March, Cobenzl wrote to his court: "Bonaparte wants to secure for himself the friendship of Paul at any price; he is ready to make any sacrifice to bring this about." A few hours before, in the night, the Czar had been murdered by his courtiers, by the officers entrusted with the guardianship of his life. This blow ended, not only his existence, but also his system of policy. Without going back to the ways of Catherine, his successor, Alexander I, nevertheless directed the policy of Russia into a course that diverged from the aggressive and extravagant projects of his father.

Eight days later Nelson's ships appeared before Copenhagen, opened fire on the Danish fleet, and destroyed or captured it. Whilst the Prussian battalions crossed the frontiers of Hanover, the English Admiral prepared to enter the Baltic and wreak the same destruction on the Russian and Swedish fleets. But his own Government checked the fiery zeal of the British hero of the sea. On the 14th of March, Pitt had been forced from the helm of the state. The change of government, which was not the result of foreign but of home affairs, and

especially the conflict in Parliament over the Irish question, had, as usually happens with England, an immediate effect on foreign relations. There was a final success for her in the conquest of Egypt, balanced to some extent by the repulse of Nelson in an attack on the flotilla assembled at Boulogne for the invasion of the country. So the cabinet of St. James's decided on entering into peace negotiations, for which Napoleon had been prepared ever since Marengo. While he drew still closer his understanding with Spain and Portugal, he applied himself to the negotiation with England. Preliminaries of peace were signed at London on the 1st of October, 1801, and the final treaty was concluded at Amiens on the 27th of March, 1802. England agreed to restore the French colonies and even to evacuate her conquests in the Mediterranean. Egypt was to be given back to Turkey, Malta to the Knights of St. John, Minorca to Spain. The allies of France were also to regain their colonies with the exception of Trinidad, which was lost by Spain, and Ceylon by Holland. Napoleon on the other hand engaged only to guarantee the integrity of Portugal, and to recall his troops from Naples. France thus resigned all claim to the dominion of the Mediterranean, but her command of its coasts gave her a greater influence there than England, which henceforth was to hold only its gateway at Gibraltar. But so serious had the effect of the war been on English industry that the free access to the markets of Europe seemed to be a sufficient compensation for the abandonment of conquests that commanded the ways to India.

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Napoleon had indeed accomplished what his fellow-countrymen expected of him. With one mighty stroke he had brought them peace, and not to them only but to all the nations of Europe. So not France alone, but Europe, celebrated him as the hero of the century, whose ideal was peace for the world, and Humanity, that had had such disappointments during ten years of bloodshed, seemed to find in him its restorer. So thought Beethoven, as he gave the name of "Bonaparte" to his Third Symphony, composed at this time, with its heroic music re-echoing his mighty deeds.

From all parts of Europe foreigners poured into Paris, eager to see the man who had bidden the angry waves be still. A young German—Solger—well known for his writings on æsthetics, and later on Professor at the University of Berlin, and who had already seen him before Marengo at a review in the Place du Carrousel, describes the personal impression made at this time by the First Consul on those who saw him. In the midst of his generals, whose uniforms were all covered with gold, he himself was simply dressed—a plain blue uniform with white facings, and without any embroidery; not even gold lace on the hat, which was decorated only with the national cockade. Further, Solger notes the smallness and insignificance of his figure, his energetic bearing, his pale or rather yellowish face, without a sign of life in it. "But," he writes, "he has strong and extremely interesting features; the portraits one generally sees flatter him, but they are suggestive of his great character. Since he has been in Egypt he wears his dark brown hair short, and its colour makes the paleness of his face more terrible. Small as he is,

he sits his horse with a certain air of majesty, and this is seen especially in his face. When he rides past a standard, he raises his hat with a noble gesture. Whenever he comes by, one hears on all sides, 'It is he! it is he!' and women hold up their children to show them this marvellous man." The German heard a woman in the crowd call out, "*Voyez-vous? C'est votre roi!*" for which, however, she was reproved by a neighbour.

A power had been created such as Europe had never seen. In comparison with the forces he could command, what signified the few thousand men at whose head emperors of the Middle Ages laboriously asserted shadowy claims amid the eddying fortunes of everlasting civil wars? What the great rulers of France, a Louis XIV, a Henri IV, a Philippe le Bel had dreamed of in fantastic schemes, or projects that had ended only in failure, was now realised before the eyes of the world. France, surrounded by vassal states, had become the chief Power of Europe. Only one policy was possible on the Continent, that which the Ruler of France willed. The defeats of the old monarchy by nations that a century before, under Louis XIV, had stood so low, had acted as one of the chief impulses to the Revolution, but this was now a thing of the past, the shame of these defeats was blotted out, and the thirst for power—perhaps the deepest feeling of the nation during the Revolution—completely satisfied. The State had entered upon a career that accorded with the genius of France. It was thought that the storms were over, and in what had seemed to many to be shipwreck and utter ruin the world now recognised the new birth of the nation.

But endless was the work that had yet to be done if the new building on the foundations laid by the Constitution of December, 1799, was to be as solidly erected as Napoleon had promised to his friends on the evening of the 19th Brumaire. This was why he had so long delayed before going to the army and taking over its supreme command, and this was what brought him back so soon to Paris after Marengo. He now gave almost more thought to his civil than to his military duties. To none of those who worked with him in the Council of State and the Ministry was he inferior in insight and mastery of details, and he excelled them all in his indefatigable energy and that eagle glance under which each particular appeared as a part in the general design that lay spread out in its completeness before his all-embracing mind. The foundations remained throughout those that the Revolution had laid down, but the energy working from below, bent only on self-assertion, the disorderly and typically Revolutionary element, was eliminated, and unity that dominated everything was established, a close-knit organisation penetrating to all parts, even to the most remote villages; a single will concentrated at the central point, and embodied in the person of the one ruler. The departments were maintained as the essential units of the administration. Napoleon moreover established in this connection the triple progression originally decreed by the Constituent Assembly, but abolished in the tumult of the Revolution, for he introduced again, under the name of Arrondissements, an intermediate division between the Department and the Commune, the District, which the Constitution of the Year VII had expressly eliminated. But the choice by the people of the

officials in charge of all these districts and their administration by elected committees was set aside, and at the head of each of three divisions were placed Prefects, Sub-Prefects, and Mayors, all chosen by the central government from the list of Notables and all in receipt of State pay. True there were beside them local committees, but these were again selected from the list of Notables by the Prefects of Departments, and had only an advisory voice. They only met once a year, and sat for fourteen days, the District Council under the presidency of the Sub-Prefect, and the Council General under the Prefect. Their position corresponded to that of the Representative Bodies in the central government. They discussed the incidence of direct taxes, and the expenditure for their district, and it was theirs to make known to the Government local needs and interests. Compared to the bureaucracy of continental countries, such as Prussia for instance, there was here a certain amount of self-government, but compared to the licence of the days of the Revolution their position was one of obedient subjection. The Prefects themselves were, to use Napoleon's well-known words, only First Consuls on a small scale, politically and socially as powerful in regard to all below them, but dependent on the power above them. They had no right to a pension, no protection against disciplinary measures, and they were removable at a moment's notice. How could any one of them dare to oppose the expression of the supreme will?

The great codification of law and procedure, which was carried out and promulgated during these years under Napoleon's immediate inspiration, was like the system of local government in its dependence on and

development from the Revolution, and in the same way it has become one of the foundations of modern France. For a full hundred years this new *Code civil* has been the law in force, not only in France, but from Rotterdam to Freiburg, and in Italy also. Wherever the Great Man once was in power it remains like a rock past which the floods flow without harming it. Incomparable is the logic, the unity, the practical efficiency of this work, which the Revolution had been always promising and never producing, and which now, begun in August, 1800, was completed in four months. It was elaborated by five lawyers on the basis of a draft prepared by Cambacérès, and was put into its final form and revised by the Council of State under the presidency of the First Consul. We know that it was Napoleon himself who gave its definitive form to more than one paragraph. In nothing that he created is that great ideal of the Revolution—the equality of rights for all, without distinction of class or creed—given clearer and more energetic expression than in the *Code Napoléon*, as this book of the law was so rightly named.

There were other measures of his bearing on the welfare of the nation, and directed to ensuring that peace and order which we know were its greatest need—a resettlement of the administration, the taxes and customs, the forests that had been allowed to run wild, the national property, that had been for the most part squandered in the paper money issues of the Revolution, the removal of the general insecurity that had prevailed to an unheard-of extent in the Provinces, and which was now kept in check by a police organisation which acted in the sternest way.

Everywhere the ability, the knowledge, and the energy of the officials and of men of business were untiringly and cheerfully at work under the encouragement of the active iron will at the centre of affairs. The results were soon seen. The fertility of the soil, the diligence and industrial activity of the people, contributed to the same end; in a surprisingly short time there was a great increase of business of all kinds.

But the Government paid attention to the intellectual as well as the material needs of the nation, always on the principles already accepted, which inspired its whole activity. The Education Law of the year 1802 organised the schools in the three grades that have become familiar to us—primary schools in each Commune, established by the mayors under the superintendence of the Sub-Prefects; secondary schools in the chief towns of the Departments, under the superintendence of the Prefects; thirty-two Lycées or high-schools, giving a classical and modern education, from which a fifth of their pupils after completing their course would pass on to the new special high schools of law, medicine, science, etc. The whole was under control of inspectors, and there were thousands of free places for the children of soldiers and officials. This department bore the same characteristic mark—the aim at increasing the nation's strength by a fixed method of action. The intellectual life was not to be considered as something apart from the concerns of the State, and it might develop itself freely in its own sphere, with the understanding always that this must be so long only as it was willing to serve the centrally organised power. But everything was not brought

to this point at once. The Press had at first more freedom than under the Revolution. Even in the *Moniteur*, which was henceforth recognised as the official organ of the Government, the opinions of the opposition could still be put forward. But here too the reins were gradually drawn tighter and tighter; and soon in France, and wherever else the power of the One Man extended, nothing could be written or printed that diverged from the prescribed line.

But were there not in the French nation men whose feelings in their very inmost nature were reluctant to admit this claim to place the individual life of each and every one at the service of one central will? In this connection it is interesting to see how Napoleon came to a settlement with the Catholic Church.

The Revolutionary state had had no sterner foe than the Church, which for twelve hundred years had developed in most intimate union with the life of the nation. While the Crown and the privileged classes, the old army and all the institutions of the *Ancien Régime* had been swept away, the Church had remained standing, a rock against which all the raging storm of the Revolution had dashed itself in vain. It had become the strongest refuge of all the reactionary parties, for it had drawn, not only men of high station, but the masses too, into its service, uniting once more rulers and subjects on the same side. Nowhere had there been a fiercer struggle than in La Vendée. The King himself had given the faithful an example of fidelity. The Church had been for him too what he clung to most strongly at the last; and it was even more for her than for the Crown that he had gone to martyrdom.

And yet at first the Revolution had no intention of touching dogma itself. It took indeed the nomination of the Bishops from the Pope and transferred it to the Archbishops, but it did not purpose to tear asunder the spiritual connection of the French Church with the Papacy. It had even expressly prescribed to the bishops that immediately after their election they were to send to Rome a written declaration of their union with "the visible head of the universal Church." It placed the clergy of each diocese in much closer dependence on their bishops than the old State had ever done or even purposed to do. It left these servants of the Church no possibility of departing from the directions of their superiors in doctrine and discipline. But at the same time the closest resemblance was to be established between the constitution of Church and State. The boundaries of the dioceses were to be made to correspond with those of the Departments. The chief city of each Department was to be the residence of its bishop. The choice of those who were to fill ecclesiastical benefices was to be made in the same way as for civil employments, namely, by popular election. All connection with the old Church of the days of privilege was to be severed, and the new Church made as democratic as the State itself. The promoters of the new order had left the Church of France its dogma, full of the spirit of the Roman Church that claimed the name of universal, and yet they hoped to nationalise it. They thought they could link it closer than ever to its spiritual chiefs and their head at Rome in all that belonged to its special life, and yet they wanted at the same time to make it serve the ends of the Revolution.

Now the Revolution so far succeeded that it created

a schism in the ranks of the clergy, and by means of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, accepted by the King in July, 1790, it had founded a Church according to its own ideals. But the opposing party were not to be thereby brought to submission; they only acted all the more fanatically against those who had left them, and who were hated by all the enemies of France. But this Revolutionary church itself was involved in the storm that raged more and more fiercely against the State, whose creature it was. It had consequently to endure fiery tribulation and persecution at the hands of its masters, and its bishops and priests became martyrs of a faith that their former brethren regarded as an apostasy from the Church. Meanwhile the Revolution, in its efforts to retain its hold on the already diminishing sympathies of the people, was providing itself with new forms of public worship, strange imitations of the former ritual; but all this fell down in ruin at the moment when its prophets in their turn had to ascend the scaffold. At length, under the Directory, and indeed under the influence of Vendémiaire and Napoleon's triumph, the Government proclaimed toleration for all religious denominations, and the neutrality of the State with regard to them. But the result of this free competition was the almost immediate victory of the old Church over all its rivals. It was no help to the Constitutional Church that it remained subject to the government of the Directory (by which it was all the same harshly treated), that it hailed with delight the *coup d'état* of Brumaire which brought it relief; and that it willingly supported the new ruler of France. In spite of all this, the desertions from its ranks grew more numerous every

day. While in the reopened churches of their opponents the faithful crowded round their old pastors, now returned from exile or from prison, the bishops and priests of the Constitutional Church, however correct might be their conduct or however Catholic in other respects their teaching, had to face empty benches. The day could be foreseen when, under the new system of toleration, all France would, without the least compulsion, return to obedience to Rome.

It was not as if, amongst the masses thus brought under the influence of the clergy, there was any yearning for the land of Egypt out of which they had been brought forth through a sea of blood. The very priests who had led their peasants against the Revolutionists in the war of La Vendée, had in the spring of 1789 been the first to throw in their lot with the Tiers Etat. For them the fleshpots of the Church under the old order had been scanty enough, and the Civil Constitution offered them a better and fairer provision than their old rulers. Thus it gave them the prospect of rising in the ecclesiastical hierarchy as well as their nobly born brethren, in whose monopoly had been all the higher and more richly endowed posts in the church of the old régime. They were accordingly, like the mass of the faithful, in favour of having a Church in which the old conditions, the former division of goods, would cease, and the same democratic order as in the State would be established; but only on condition that the State itself was willing to come back to the old altars, and that the Holy Father would receive it back into the bosom of the Church in which salvation was alone to be found.

Napoleon merely argued from these tendencies of opinion to their consequences. His own mind kept the bent that had been given to it in his youth. Like Voltaire, he held religion to be good enough "for cobblers and servant girls," but like the patriarch of enlightenment himself he recognised that it was necessary for such as these. He saw, as he said, in the Christian religion, not so much the mystery of the Incarnation as the mystery of social order. It connected with heaven an idea of equality which might hinder the rich from being massacred by the poor. "Society," he once remarked to Roederer, to whom we owe our knowledge of so many of his master's familiar sayings, "cannot exist without inequality of material wealth, and this inequality cannot exist without religion. When a man is dying of hunger beside another who is surfeited with superfluities, it is impossible for him to patiently bear this difference, if there is not an authority to say to him: 'God wills it so. There must be poor and rich in this world, but later in eternity things will be arranged otherwise.'" He had expressed himself in much the same way in the *Discours de Lyon*, but there was a difference in the way he now regarded the thoughts and work of the prophets who had been the teachers of his youth. They had become irksome to him, as mere idealists who with their fantastic dreams befogged themselves and the world, and who deserved, if not persecution, at least contemptuous neglect. How often did he thus refer to Rousseau! "Religion," he said, "is just as valuable as vaccination, which satisfies our sense of the marvellous, and saves us from charlatans and spellmongers. The priests are worth more than Cagliostro, Kant, and all

the German dreamers." He himself neither went to Confession nor received Communion, and if at times he had to be present at Mass, he paid no attention to the service. He was with difficulty persuaded to have a High Mass celebrated on the conclusion of the Concordat, instead of simply a Te Deum as he himself suggested, but he would not take part in the ceremony of the kiss of peace. He was however quite prepared for recognition of the Church, compromise with her, because he acknowledged her to be what she was, a power.

We have seen how already in the summer of 1796 this instinctive recognition of power drew him towards the Church and gave a different colour to his policy from that of the Directory, and how in so doing he only took up again a line of policy that already had been followed by Augustin Robespierre towards the Catholics of Italy in the spring of 1794, and to which his elder brother was not entirely averse. In no other matter is the relationship between the two tyrants plainer than in this.

If since 1795 the Royalist party in France had again a prospect of coming into power it was because the clerical tendency had so greatly increased. Napoleon triumphed over this party most effectually because he re-established relations with Rome. That Pius VII adopted this course was the greatest act of his life. He had been elected Pope on the 13th of March, 1800, in the neighbourhood of Venice, under the protection of the Austrian arms. The fortune of war was still in the balance; the allies had at last been victorious; and the new Pope recognised Louis XVIII as king. But the situation was altered by Marengo. Italy had fallen into the hands of the

victor, who wished to have peace with the Church as well as with the Courts of Europe, but a peace such as he could seek as the heir and representative of the Revolution. Immediately after Marengo, and while he was still at Milan, Napoleon sent a letter to the Pope as well as to the Emperor, and proposed conditions to him through the Bishop of Vercelli. The Curia had sided with the French Royalists, but they had no close connections with the Coalition; the English were heretics; Austria, as was well known at Rome, always had an eye on the legations; and Russia, too, with her claims on Malta, and her approaches to the Slav races of the Balkan Peninsula, could not be much in sympathy with Rome; there was no hope of deliverance from any of them. Napoleon was strong enough to repeat the attack the Directory had made on the Pope's predecessor and on his States; one blow from him would be enough to put an end at least for a while to the temporal power of the Papacy. Instead of this the French troops were halted at the frontier of the Papal States, and no further demand was made beyond the withdrawal of the Neapolitan troops, thus freeing the territories of the Church from allies that had become useless. He did not expressly ask for peace, but he recognised the power of Rome. And so Pius VII took the step from which a new era for the Church was to date.

But when he took the hand of the First Consul, he thereby passed into the sphere of influence of the Revolution. He had to accept its ecclesiastical legislation in essential points; the confiscation of Church property which, according to the old theory, still belonged to the universal Church and not to the nation, but now had been appropriated to national

objects; the payment of the clergy by the Government, and the whole of the new organisation that the Revolutionary State had given to the Church. Napoleon, too, wished to include the Gallican articles as something won by his predecessors in the Government of France. The nomination of archbishops and bishops, which the Revolution had placed in the hands of the people, was henceforth to be done by the First Consul. The election of curés was abolished; they were to be named by the bishops, but the choice was to be restricted to priests who were acceptable to the Government, and the whole clergy was closely attached to the State and its chief by the oath of allegiance and by the acceptance of salaries. The Pope retained the right, which the Revolutionary State had denied him, of inducting the prelates in canonical form; but he was to agree to obtain the resignation of the bishops displaced by the Revolution and to accept the bishops of the Revolutionary period, that is, to give up the ecclesiastical system of the Emigration and acknowledge that of Napoleonic France.

At the same time, there were advantages for the Church that might well content the Pope. Secured in his temporal power, in peace and friendship with the most powerful man in Europe, he could be certain of exercising the deepest influence on French society through the renewal of the Church's life in France. The head of the State thus reconciled to him had succeeded to the position of the "Most Christian Kings."

And in fact Napoleon acted already like a king. Since February, 1800, he had transferred his residence to the Tuileries. Both of his colleagues in the

Consulate, accepting the situation, retired into the background, leaving him alone in his dignity—Cambacérès at once, Lebrun a little later. Before long a new Court etiquette arose, with a peculiar mingling of old and new forms, and the spacious rooms began to be filled with a brilliant court of ladies and gentlemen. It was a field in which the wife of Napoleon could well display her social talents and her liking for luxury and display. Beside her was to be seen the mother of Napoleon—Lætitia—still beautiful, and with a proud bearing, despite her Corsican dialect, smiling with delight at her son, though always anxious as to how long this good fortune would last (*Pourvou que cela doure*, as she used to say), and therefore careful to set aside out of the millions that now flowed in as the revenue of her family some small savings for the poorer days to come. Then there were the brothers and sisters of the First Consul, with their wives and husbands, and an ever-growing circle of courtiers, ministers, and generals. Some of them had been not so long ago obscure lawyers or mere sergeants, and their wives hardly knew how to manage their trains or to move about on the floor. Some were bearers of the oldest names in France, who for long years had eaten the bread of banishment, and whose fathers and brothers had been sent to the scaffold by those others. Now they were all serving the One Man.

As the centre of this new State the First Consul was also the object of the attention of those who still clung to the old order, and would neither abandon hope nor cease from the struggle. There was evidence of this in the attempt made against him on the Christmas Eve of 1800 by certain fanatics. In the

narrow Rue St. Nicaise, which his carriage had to pass through on the way to the Opera, where Haydn's *Creation* was to be produced, a barrel, filled with gunpowder, bullets, and other substances, was exploded as he went by. Only the speed at which his coachman drove saved him; many of the passers-by were killed. The deed was attributed to England, as its author was George Cadoudal, a protégé of the English Ministry. Napoleon at first thought it was the work of the Jacobins, and he seized on the opportunity to visit the remnant of the party with severe penalties, and persisted in this even after it had been discovered who the real author of the attempt was. More than a hundred of the Jacobin party were arrested by Fouché, who knew his men, and after a brief investigation transported to the swamps of Cayenne.

Public opinion was now satisfied. Wherever he showed himself rejoicings and honours surrounded the youthful ruler, "the immortal Bonaparte," as one of the Papal envoys had already called him. There was no protest when, in January, 1802, he suppressed an opposition movement in the Tribunate by expelling from it Benjamin Constant, André Chenier, and other Liberals. So, too, when after the Peace of Amiens he once more appealed to the nation as to whether they would prolong his office for life and give him the right of naming his successor, over three and a half millions voted "*Yes*," and only a few thousands "*No*." It was the Clericals who brought in the half-million votes more than at the first plebiscite. They thus expressed their gratitude for the Concordat. Then appeared two decrees of the Senate, expressing the gratitude of the nation, and

enlarging the powers of the Chief Consul. First he was given the right of proposing his successor to the Senate, and further authority to ratify and promulgate treaties of alliance and peace without consulting the national representatives; finally the old royal privilege of mercy. The powers of the Senate were also increased. It was given the right to interpret the Constitution, to dissolve the Corps Législatif and the Tribunate, which was now reduced to fifty members, and to revise the judgments of the courts of law if they were injurious to the safety of the State. But all this was in fact only a further strengthening of the power of Napoleon, for he had a decisive influence on the numbers and choice of the senators. Henceforth Bonaparte lacked only the name of King.

CHAPTER V

FROM BOULOGNE TO TILSIT

NAPOLEON was now the over-lord not of France alone, but of its vassal-lands as well. And nothing was more natural, more inevitable than that the exercise of his authority in them should result in transformations similar to those that had taken place in the Republic. The same thing came about in Holland as in Italy and in Switzerland. In the place of a Directory, a Grand Pensionary was elected at the Hague (October, 1801) and a President at Milan, Napoleon ensuring his own appointment to the latter post (January, 1802), his brother Joseph being unwilling to accept it. Maret, Napoleon's Secretary of State, and the most trustworthy and zealous of all his associates, had drawn up the Constitution which was granted to Lombardy, and Napoleon influenced the elections in the way he desired. Neither in Holland nor in Italy were these changes unwelcome, at least with the ruling classes; indeed, the majority of the Italian patriots rejoiced in the innovation, inasmuch as Napoleon by designating the new State the "Italian Republic" seemed to point to the realisation of their greatest ambition, the unity of the Italian nation. Napoleon, however, made sure of Piedmont, the Alpine district with which he had become familiar during his advance

upon Marengo, by constituting it one of the French military divisions—a foreshadowing of the annexation which was to follow in the autumn of 1802. In the same way, new systems of government were introduced in Lucca and in Genoa, which resulted in placing these small Republics in the hands of France. Napoleon's power continued to assert itself unchecked. The foreign Powers were unable to stay its advance, Austria least of all, though she had thus to witness the baffling of all her Italian hopes.

In Switzerland, the old Constitution had fallen a victim to the combined influences of the French invasion and the local party of Reform ; unity of the State, destruction of the power of the aristocracy, the placing of the Cantons and Estates upon a footing of equality, and the establishment of religious toleration had been the aims of the reformers, and, German and French alike, they were aware that these objects were to be attained by the intervention of France. Switzerland had been drawn into the great conflict, and had become one of the chief theatres of war. Peace had no sooner been declared than a civil strife was set on foot by the reactionary Forest Cantons in league with Berne, and the well-wishers of France were in a serious plight until Ney appeared on the scene. This was Napoleon's cue to intervene and take up the work of reform. At Lyons, similarly, whither the representatives of the Swiss cantons were summoned in December, 1802, Napoleon appeared again in the rôle of peacemaker. His will imposed itself upon all parties. He was able to act as mediator between them, simply because he stood above them and had them in his power. What he then sketched out and later, in February, 1803,

decreed, was not merely to remain the Swiss Constitution, so long as Switzerland held its ground, but also the foundation upon which the Confederacy was to base all its future developments—a striking proof of the statesmanlike faculties of the Emperor. The Francophils, the advocates of unity, did not have it all their own way. They saw the establishment of equality in the eyes of the law, and the abolition of the privileges of the aristocrats, but the subordination of the cantons to the central legislature was clearly limited. "The Confederacy," declared Napoleon in the course of his address to the Swiss representatives, "must be made up of a league of small states, whose methods of administration are as diverse as the peculiarities of their soil, but which are bound together by a simple Constitution, which should be neither oppressive nor expensive." The barbarous survivals from the Middle Ages must cease to be, France could not suffer them. "But centralisation such as we have in France would not do for you. The mountaineers, who look on William Tell as their exemplar, could not be subjected to the same laws as the rich citizens of Zurich or Berne. . . . A Confederacy which shall secure to each separate State its natural independence, leaving it in possession of its own territories and free to preserve its own customs and idiosyncrasies—a Confederacy that shall be invincible within the girdle of its mountains—that will be your true strength." And Napoleon proceeded to give a solemn warning to England, whose agents had been long busying themselves in the country: he would incorporate Switzerland in France, he declared, on the first signs of the English Government venturing to tamper with its Constitution.

Napoleon did not give his mediation for nothing. The looser the union with Switzerland, the stronger must be the bonds between France and Italy. To this end the Alpine passes were essential; and no roads were more convenient than those which traversed the Valais district. Therefore in August, 1802, this region was constituted, with the full consent of its inhabitants, a separate Republic, whose roadways were at the disposal of the protecting power.

Napoleon had become the mediator also in Germany, as a result of the peace of Lunéville, which, as we have seen, had sanctioned the principle of secularisation. He had achieved there the same unique position that he had made for himself at Campo Formio; in his capacity as specially invoked umpire he was able to carry out decisions that reversed the whole character of forms of government, dating from a thousand years before; and that were to be the basis of a new Germany. But it was his policy now to win over Prussia instead of Austria; he was bent upon securing the alliance of the great Northern Power. He lavished on the Hohenzollerns the spoils accruing from the exactions of Prince-Bishops in Northern Germany—half a million new subjects, a number far exceeding what they had lost on the left bank of the Rhine. These were for the most part thoroughly German districts, won back to Catholicism since the Reformation, and they now served to connect the Brandenburg dominions of Prussia with its possessions on the Rhine. In their vicinity, in Fulda, Cosvey, and what else remained of clerical and civil, the free states of the old Empire, the Prince of Orange, the Hohenzollerns' cousin who had lost Holland, was also provided for. Catholic Sees in the

valley of the Main and Swabia, as well as Protestant free towns, such as Ulm and Memmingen, were handed over to Bavaria, embracing a population of nearly a million souls, a figure far outnumbering what Bavaria had been deprived of. It was the rich and powerful who reaped all the benefits from the new changes, the feeble and insignificant had to pay the penalty; for it was only those already in power who could serve the interests of France. All this was done without regard for the feelings of Austria. The Austrian Emperor saw his dominions parcelled out thus before his eyes. He first got news of it in Vienna from the Paris *Moniteur*. It was maddening, but what was to be done in the face of the unanimous will of half a continent? As a matter of fact, however, the Hapsburgs did not themselves go empty-handed. The Grand Duke of Tuscany was accorded Salzburg and sundry adjoining Sees, while, in lieu of Breisgau and Ortenau the Emperor received episcopal territories in the Tyrol; it being understood that he acquiesced in all the changes in progress in Italy. Meanwhile these arrangements were accepted by the Reichstag at Ratisbon on February 25, 1803. This meant the absolute defeat of Austria; a diplomatic defeat more serious than that on the field of battle. Her dominion was bounded by the banks of the Inn and the mountains of Bohemia.

England also was hard hit. Every step forward that Napoleon took on the Continent involved some detriment to the insular Power. And Napoleon was not minded to spare his enemy. The hopes that England had cherished in regard to her industrial exports had been disappointed, and the protective

tariffs of France and her allies had been increased. Napoleon, in fact, was putting out all his efforts to extend the influence of France beyond the seas. One of his first and strongest desires was to win back Domingo, the former colony of France, which the Revolutionaries had allowed to fall into the hands of the blacks. He despatched thither his brother-in-law Leclerc with a powerful army to overthrow Toussaint l'Ouverture, the native leader. He sought too to draw into the sphere of his untiring energy those other French colonies which still remained—Pondicherry and the rest of the French possessions in India, Isle de France and Réunion in the Indian Ocean; he was anxious to colonise Madagascar and to develop the newly-won colony on the Mississippi; nor had he yet abandoned all hopes of Egypt, while he aspired to renewing the old bond of friendship with the Sultan. This had been the path upon which France had run counter to English ambitions, and from which England had ousted her. Napoleon relied on his own ability to move forward on it again, and spread the might of France beyond the seas.

Was Napoleon bent at this period upon renewed war with England? The answer to this question must affect our whole judgment of his policy and of the triumphs and catastrophes to which it led. Did he propose so soon to violate the pledge which he had given his nation in Brumaire, and which he had redeemed at Marengo? Was the lust of strife and conquest so strong in him as to make him heedless of the wishes of his people, expressed a thousand times over, and to blind him to the manifest interests of France? Was there in fact nothing left in him—

as his enemies were then already declaring, and as historians have so often since maintained—but an insatiable craving for aggrandisement and destruction, nothing but that ruthless greed of power which in his youth he had condemned as the most harmful of all obsessions? He himself has denied this accusation. "It was my desire," he said once at St. Helena, "to give the world peace, but they persisted in making me into a god of war." But for an answer to the question, we must not go to the statements of either accuser or accused: we must examine the facts for ourselves, and try to discover the guiding spirit of his entire policy.

It seems obvious that a policy of colonial extension could only flourish in times of peace. It is certain, moreover, that Napoleon was in earnest about reviving the old French colonies. His brother-in-law had to take twenty thousand men to Domingo, and after he had fallen a victim to yellow fever, his successor had to be reinforced by thousands more, to fill up the gaps caused by the deadly climate and the enemy's bullets. The wording of the orders given to the leaders of the squadron told off for service in the West Indies, point to the imminence of war with England it is true (these orders were issued in March, 1803, on the eve of the war), but we find that the utmost circumspection is enjoined upon them in regard to the English. In all the enterprises set on foot by Napoleon in France itself there is the same suggestion of peaceful intentions: the making of new roads and canals and the repairing of old ones, the stimulating of trades and industries, the active support given to agriculture and forestry, all such undertakings involving an outlay of millions, and demanding peaceful

conditions for their fruitful development. That certainly was the view of the Council by which Napoleon was supported, of the Prefects who were in close touch with the interests and wishes of the people, of the Ministers who felt responsible for what was being done, and of Napoleon's own brothers, who hoped to enjoy the good things that he had placed in their hands. So it was too with the immense majority of the people themselves, who now for the first time for ten years were able to breathe in safety and to experience all the blessings of peace. Only a small fraction of the irreconcilables based their hopes upon war: among them no longer the Jacobins, who were concentrating themselves now upon internal questions. It was the Royalists most of all who hoped for an outbreak of strife, and more and more ardently as the crash came near.

Very different was the condition of things in England. Here the Ministry represented the most peaceful element of the nation, for it constituted the Peace Party as opposed to the warlike tendencies of Pitt and his friends, who hoped to come into office by means of the war. These pointed to Napoleon's encroachments in Holland, Italy, and Switzerland, to the hostile tariff raised by France against English industries, and to the aggressive colonial policy of the conqueror. The great shipowners and manufacturers joined hands with the aristocracy in this matter, and with these two classes went those dependent upon them, and even the working-men, all of whom would suffer from any check to the national welfare. The war-feeling made swift headway throughout the country. The press, almost without distinction of party, indulged in the most violent diatribes against

the French usurper. England meanwhile remained the chief refuge for the *émigrés*, whose old leaders, the Comte d'Artois and Cadoudal, no less than renegades and traitors to the Republic, such as Dumouriez and Pichegru, still found safety and welcome on its soil. English journalists unblushingly incited them to new attempts upon Napoleon's life, and the network of their conspiracies spread even into the Ministry.

Now it may be said that Napoleon ought to have abstained from his policy of aggression and encroachment. But the annexation of Piedmont and the establishment of the Italian Republic, as well as the other changes in Italy, dated from before the peace of Amiens. This was the case, too, with the creation of the new state of things in Holland, while the innovations in Germany were provided for at Lunéville. The intervention in Switzerland was the only action with which England was perhaps warranted in reproaching Napoleon. But his intervention had been invited and had been welcome.

The time had not yet come when the small States followed him unwillingly. They were still drawn towards him by motives of self-interest. They sought his protection against their adversaries, and intimated that if he did not concede it to them they must apply for help elsewhere.

For Napoleon's every move was bound now to affect in some way his enemies. England's influences were at work in Switzerland as everywhere else, even in St. Petersburg and Constantinople, wherever enemies of France were to be found. To give back Tuscany to its original rulers would have meant, as Napoleon had pointed out in May, 1801, to the Austrian Ambassador, handing over Leghorn to England.

Hatred still burned in the hearts of the Bourbons of Naples, and there were groups of Reactionaries everywhere awaiting the moment when they could fall on the great victor from behind. The English themselves were not content to play a waiting game; they had never, indeed, been so eager to develop their own possessions, notably in India, where they were soon to become so powerful. Austria, above all, could not look on unmoved at the whittling away of her dominions, while Prussia resented the incursions upon her territory made by this masterful invader. With satisfaction, if without much gratitude, she had accepted her portion of the booty Napoleon had accorded her, but it was a mournful reflection to the Hohenzollerns that he should be dominant in the sphere in which Prussia had been pre-eminent.

In brief, the balance of European power had been upset, and the various great nations saw their very existence endangered unless they exerted themselves to restore it. The upsetting of it, if the immediate outcome of Napoleon's victories, cannot be ascribed exclusively to his policy; it was the policy of the Directory that had brought France to this position. Napoleon, as we have seen, had had a good deal to say to this policy, but he had inherited rather than initiated it.

And now that Napoleon had secured peace through his triumphs, he sought to extend the power of France beyond Europe. Every ship that set out from the French ports, every cargo that came back to them from India or the West Indies, meant a loss to the merchants of the Thames and the manufacturers of Leeds and Birmingham. England had won dominion over the seas by conquest. Was

she to see herself beaten, or, at least, her might diminished, in times of peace, by the rivals she had always vanquished in times of war? Was she to wait and see the trade of the French become predominant all over Europe, even to the Ionian Islands and the Bosphorus, and its operations extended to Egypt and India? It was not the execution of the King, but the annexation of Belgium that had drawn England into the war. She had attacked the French Republic, not because it had become a hot-bed of anarchy and revolution, but because it was making France into a great Power, before whose advance proud Albion herself began to feel alarm.

England was still in possession of Malta. With this pledge in her hands she could regard without anxiety the hopes of her neighbour for any new expedition across the Mediterranean. The date by which she was to have evacuated it had long since passed; Napoleon's troops had been withdrawn from Taranto at the appointed time; yet the English showed no disposition to remove their garrison from the island. To all Napoleon's remonstrances and threats they offered only the answer that it was for him first to reconstitute the condition of things upon the Continent that had preceded the peace of Amiens. It was in vain, too, that Napoleon protested against the unbridled vituperations of the London press. Addington only shrugged his shoulders with the reply that in England the press was free, and that he had no control over it. Assuredly if we inquire into the question which of the two was making for war, France or England, there can be no difficulty in coming to a decision.

But this is not the whole extent of the opposition

between the two Powers with which we are dealing. If we must admit that England and her allies acted on the offensive, there is little reason for denying that France also took this course. For where in the whole world do we ever see a political power adopting a persistently unchanging attitude, and where is the line to be drawn between pressing forward and refusing to give way? To use a saying of Ranke, "every power has a tendency to push on until a barrier is raised from without against its advance." It is true that the enjoyment of peace was the chief concern of the French people, and therefore the special interest of Napoleon; but it must be a peace that would give the exhausted country the means of restoring and developing the economic prosperity of which revolution and war had so long deprived it. This was what the French people in their desire for peace demanded of their new ruler. They had hailed Napoleon as their deliverer, and made him their master, just because they saw a promise of all this in the peace which his sword had won and his genius secured for them. Neither on sea nor on land could he afford to give up the advantages he had gained. But the policy of promoting the welfare of the nation, to which he had devoted himself since the 18th of Brumaire, already implied an extension of its power. The restoration and development of the colonies, the reconstruction of the navy, the protection of the markets of France and her dependencies, the stimulation by his government of the industrial energies of this intelligent, hard-working, and powerful nation—all this implied the strongest attack upon the sphere of English interests. Just as the territorial extension of France

had destroyed the balance of power on the Continent, this new economic policy threatened the supremacy of English trade, to which the ruin of French industry had been of the greatest advantage. This was the rivalry which the conflicts of a hundred years had not ended, for each treaty of peace had been only a truce, a pause for the two wrestlers to take breath. It was the same with the Peace of Amiens. In this respect, too, the First Consul was only the heir of the France of the old régime, and inherited the task that fate had laid upon it.

Now let us grant that, as a thoughtful French writer lately put it, Napoleon was not so constituted that he would wait for the development of a menacing situation; but it was rather his way to go to meet the danger, just as in his strategy and tactics he always sought to act on the offensive against his enemy. His spirit urged him on to strive with fate by meeting it face to face. He believed in his own strength. His pride was unbounded; but never had man a better right to trust in his own force and strength of will. And, on the other hand, can we suggest any reason why he should hesitate? He knew the number of his enemies, and the hatred they bore against him and his work. Was he to wait, as he himself once said, until they could satisfy their desire to invite each other to his funeral? And more than any other man, he had an eye for what was practicable and within his power, a knowledge of the situation, and a foresight of what was inevitable. He saw quite clearly the weakness of his position, the incompleteness of all that he had created, the necessity of being continually formidable to his opponents in order to keep them in check. To his restlessly active

imagination were revealed all the possibilities that lay in the bosom of the future. His brain was ever busy with the mass of combinations that the politics of Europe made possible. No one foresaw more clearly that the struggle with England would tempt his old opponents on the Continent to take advantage of the situation. What remained for him, then, but at once to set to work to strengthen his position everywhere, and to so increase his power that his enemies would give up any inclination for new coalitions? to hurl against them—as he did now—the menace that the time might perhaps be at hand, when, forced by circumstances, he would change the face of Europe and restore the Empire of the West?

But much still remained unknown to him. He did not see that hidden away under old decaying forms of government there were in the nations slumbering forces, which once they were awakened, and awakened even under the iron tread of the conqueror, would rouse the oppressed to a life-and-death struggle. That he should have been blind to such possibilities is easily understood, when we consider his life and experiences. There was a time when he had believed in such forces; it was when he still loved Corsica and hated France. Then came a brief period of excitement, when he pictured to himself a possible union of hearts between the lands that were his new and his old home, a reconciliation on the basis of ancient ideals of liberty. But when he was utterly disappointed in France, and still more in Corsica, he had cast such beliefs aside. And wherever his fate had taken him since then, the impressions made upon him had always been the same—intrigues and self-seeking on the part of those in power, and the

wretched lack of spirit in the weak, who, trembling, watched the war-god striding over their lands, and then eagerly hastened to grasp at and snatch away from their neighbours whatever advantages the victor might be able to give them. So far on the Continent he had contended only with the Cabinets and the aristocracy that shared with the various dynasties the possession of their states. And he thought that in England, too, he would be able to take advantage of the disunion that actually existed between the ruling classes and the masses, and to separate the one from the other.

But it was precisely here that he was to meet with his first great disillusionment. Brought face to face with his power, and the growing danger that threatened them, the English parties forgot their deep-rooted strife, and thought only of the national interests that bound them together. Under the pressure of public opinion, the Whig Ministry itself was drifting towards a rupture with France, even though it was thereby preparing the way to power for the Tories.

In February, 1803, on the day after he had given its new constitution, known as the "Act of Mediation," to Switzerland, the First Consul made a statement to the Senate and the Legislative Assembly on the situation of the French Republic. He alluded to the works of peace, which were bringing a new period of prosperity to the long-crippled economic resources of the nation. Then he touched upon the attitude of England, which still maintained garrisons at Alexandria and Malta. The Government, he said, was justified in complaining of this, but was informed that the ships for the withdrawal of these garrisons were already in the Mediterranean. While insisting

on his own love of peace, which would lead him to do all that was consistent with the national honour to preserve it, he remarked that in England there were two parties, contending with each other, for and against war. It was therefore necessary to take precautions, and so he had 500,000 men under arms. But England, relying only on her own resources, could not now engage in a struggle with France; and thus one might hope that the Cabinet of St. James's would give ear to the counsels of wisdom and the voice of humanity, and by the maintenance of peace secure for both nations their own happiness and the gratitude of the whole world.

The English Government gave its answer in the King's Speech on the 8th of March. It contained not a word about Malta, but announced new armaments, and then two days later the Militia was called out. Napoleon could now no longer hesitate. The gunboat flotillas at Dunkirk and Cherbourg were at once commissioned. On the same day despatches denouncing the English breach of faith were sent to Berlin and St. Petersburg. The despatch to Berlin was conveyed by General Duroc, who also took a notification that France considered that she was compelled to occupy Hanover. The Court of London was no less active. The sending of the English Ambassador, Whitworth, to Paris, was plainly meant only to veil the breach of the peace on England's part, and supply an excuse for her policy before the world. But Napoleon tore the mask from the face of his adversary. "One may slay the French people, but one cannot intimidate it," were the haughty words with which he received the envoy in the midst of his Court. "Woe to those who break treaties!

They must bear the responsibility before all Europe!" In the middle of May, Whitworth was recalled. Hostilities at once began. French merchantmen were captured by English warships on the seas. The French ports were blockaded. All English people who happened to be in France were declared to be prisoners of war.

For Prussia, too, with all this, there had come the first moment when she must choose a decisive course since the Peace of Basel. Napoleon offered her his alliance if she would guarantee the Treaty of Amiens, to which she had already pledged herself. He was anxious to be able to use the military power of North Germany to give check to his enemies on the Continent. Thus he might hope to be able to carry on the frontal attack against England without being harassed in the rear. The decision that was arrived at in Berlin was about the worst that could have been taken. There was an idea of strengthening the position of Prussia without risking anything, gaining an advantage without putting down any stake; such were the hopes of Haugwitz and the thoughts of Hardenberg and Frederick William III. If we are to form a sound judgment as to this King, we must keep in sight his action on this occasion. The later position of Prussia up to 1813 was such as to afford more than one plea for excusing his continually fluctuating policy. There were times when even Bismarck took the line of neutrality for Prussia in a European crisis, but he certainly never did so unless the taking up of this neutral position had an influence upon events beyond the frontiers of Prussia, and tended to narrow the theatre of war. This was what Napoleon had in view when he gave the Berlin

Court hopes of acquiring Hanover for Prussia. But the course chosen by the King made this impossible. He thought that with the support of Russia he could yet maintain peace, or at least secure his own neutrality. Vain hopes! His action tended rather to make a general outbreak of war inevitable.

At the end of May the French broke through the neutral zone of North Germany. Without difficulty Mortier drove the Hanoverian army back behind the Weser, and forced it to capitulate. It was a severe blow to England, but it was equally a blow to Germany and to Prussia. In North Germany now the will of the foreigner was in command. Prussia had thrown the game out of her hands.

As in the North, so also in Italy, Napoleon hastened to close the coasts against the English. Naples was occupied. This was for him an absolute necessity, for otherwise there would certainly have been a defection of the Bourbons and a landing of the English, but at the same time it tended to increase the number of his opponents. For by this step he not only touched Austria again, but he also made an incursion into the sphere of Russian interests. For Russia had already taken umbrage at the First Consul's new eastern policy, and could not now fail to be alarmed at the increase of French influence on the east coast of the Adriatic and in the Balkan Peninsula, which might follow the reoccupation of Southern Italy. Napoleon, however, did not want to break with Russia any more than with Austria; the object he kept most in view was to convince the Czar of the value of his friendship; nay, he even proposed Alexander as the arbitrator in the quarrel with England. The Czar did, in fact,

undertake to make an attempt at mediation. In August he proposed conditions of a settlement at London and Paris. According to this scheme England was to evacuate Malta, but in return was to be allowed to retain the neighbouring island of Lampedusa. But Napoleon was not merely to give up Hanover, but also Holland, Switzerland, and Italy; if the Czar gracefully permitted Napoleon perhaps to retain Piedmont, he required a corresponding compensation for the House of Savoy. This amounted to putting France back to the days before Marengo and Hohenlinden, nay, even to those before the Treaty of Campo Formio. It would have been impossible for any Government, much less for Napoleon, to consent to this. He must already have perceived that Russia would stand on the side of the enemies of France. And the Czar had no other idea. In October he suggested to Austria a new coalition. Ludwig Cobenzl, the Austrian Minister, did not conceal the fact that his own inclinations were in this direction, but he also did not hide his fear of the formidable enemy. "We are standing in front of the cannon's mouth," he said to the Russian envoy in March, 1804, "and we shall be blown to pieces before your help can reach us."

And meanwhile, Napoleon might still continue to hope that he could fight out his quarrel with England alone, and drive home that blow at the heart, the attack across the Channel, from which he had recoiled in the spring of 1798. While the Powers that were unfriendly to him on the Continent continued to hesitate, he went on strengthening his political system. He bound the Batavian Republic to supply ships and troops, and in return gave the Dutch a prospect of

having their colonies restored to them. So, too, in September, 1803, Switzerland entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with him. It was more difficult to make sure of Spain and Portugal, especially the former, for Napoleon had hurt Spanish feeling by selling Louisiana to the United States, when in his anxiety to secure the goodwill of America he had disregarded the right of repurchase of that territory which Spain had reserved when it was originally ceded to France. But at Madrid they were not in a position for resistance, and so, half by compulsion, they remained faithful to the alliance, and in October, 1803, agreed to supply ships, troops, and subsidies. Portugal went so far as to pay for her neutrality. Thus when, in February, 1804, Genoa also entered into the alliance, the whole of the Latin countries of Western Europe, with the Dutch and Swiss dependencies of France, stood ready for the struggle against the Island Kingdom.

And this was the moment when Napoleon grasped at the Imperial crown. It came to pass in connection with a fresh attempt of the Royalists against his person. They set to work again from their headquarters in England, and it was said that some of the English ministers were in the secret. The daring men who were in the plot meant to carry off the First Consul while he was on his way to Malmaison, and take him on board an English ship lying somewhere off the coast. But it is more than probable that the attack upon him would have ended like that upon the French envoys before Rastatt, or like the attempt against Paul I, and this must have been foreseen. The leaders of the party, George Cadoudal and Pichegru, themselves came over to Paris.

They reckoned on discontent among the troops and on the defection of several of the generals, above all, on that of Moreau. The Comte d'Artois, too, knew what was going on. He promised to send over his own son. But Napoleon was well served by his agents. The conspirators were waylaid and made prisoners, and confessed to everything. Even the complicity of Moreau with them was admitted. Cadoudal and others were shot; Pichegru was found one morning strangled in his prison, unquestionably by his own hand. The actor that he had always been had played his part, and so departed from life. There is no reason to suppose that his fate was the result of Napoleon's orders, a report which the enemies of the latter at once started. It was much more his interest to keep his old enemy alive, and he was ruthless only when he had an end to gain. He probably would have let Pichegru go just as he did Moreau, who was simply sentenced to two years' imprisonment, and then had the sentence commuted to banishment, when he went to America.

But Napoleon took the opportunity to hurl his lightning at a higher mark. In the course of his judicial interrogation, George Cadoudal had spoken of a prince, who was expected, but had not come. Napoleon may have believed that this meant the Duc d'Enghien, who after having been expelled from Austria at the demand of France, had ventured to take up his residence just beyond the Rhine at Ettersheim, almost under the guns of Strasburg. He was led to choose the place partly by the desire to be near his cousin Charlotte de Rohan, whom he loved, but quite as much by an intention of wait-

ing there for the war in which he hoped to take part. It was known in Paris that English agents were busy in South Germany; and it was reported that D'Enghien was in touch with them and also with the émigrés, and amongst others with Dumouriez. It was not a long step from this to the assumption that he was involved in the plot. In any case Napoleon resolved to make him a prisoner. In the month of March he was carried off to Strasburg by a raid of French dragoons, and thence taken to Paris, where he was immediately brought before a court-martial. Under examination he admitted that he had been willing to take part in a war against France, but all connection with the conspiracy he denied, and certainly with truth. Nevertheless his judges, submissive to their master's will, condemned him to death. The law that fixed this penalty for Frenchmen bearing arms against France, served as a pretext. Nothing has weighed more heavily on Napoleon's reputation than this deed. All the torrents of blood that he poured out have counted for less in this respect than the few drops of princely blood shed on the night of the 20th of March in the ditch of the château of Vincennes. And indeed the act can never be justified. No more than the outrageous treatment of Kalckstein at the hands of the Great Elector, who had him seized in the capital of a neighbouring State and dragged to the scaffold at Konigsberg; or the murder of the French envoys by Austrian hussars before Rastatt; or that greatest of all the brutal acts of this period, the bombardment of neutral and defenceless Copenhagen by the English fleet in 1807. At the same time one must take into account as some explanation that for the Bourbons

Napoleon himself was outside the pale of the law, and that twice already they had plotted against his life and freedom. "I will send back to the Bourbons the terror they hope to strike into us," he exclaimed. "Am I a dog that they think they can kill me on the highway? Are my assassins beings too sacred to touch?" It was the old method that he had so often adopted since Binasco; he meant to use terror as a means of action. The Jacobins were pleased; now, they thought, he belongs to us. But he went his own way. It was easy enough for him to declare his adherence to the Revolution: "I am the Revolution and I shall uphold it." But after, as before this event, he placed himself above all parties. He was the "man of the State," the master. Woe to those who set themselves against his power.

Two months later Napoleon was Emperor of the French. This new development had been already for some time under discussion in the Council of State and the Representative Assemblies. The attempt on his life had once more shown how much depended upon this one man. His work still lacked that guarantee of permanence which only the possession of hereditary right and legally recognised succession could ensure. And so only seven days after the execution of the Duc d'Enghien there came a proposal from the Senate to the First Consul that he should complete his work by making it as immortal as his fame; that is, that he should accept hereditary rulership. The word "Empire" was not yet spoken, and the Senate showed a little hesitation in adopting the resolution. But the end was that the representatives of the nation decreed what Napoleon desired, and what in the actual position of affairs the nation

in general felt to be a necessity. As the Decree of the Senate of the 28th Floréal of the Year XII (May 18th, 1805) expressed it, the government of the Republic was to be entrusted to an Emperor, under the title of "Emperor of the French," and Napoleon Bonaparte, First Consul of the Republic, was to become Emperor of the French. The decree conferred upon the ruler an hereditary crown, and gave him the right of naming his successor, at the same time recognising the rights of the descendants of his brothers Joseph and Louis "in direct, natural and legitimate succession." The plebiscite to which this proposal was submitted for approval, once more by an overwhelming majority gave expression to the assent of France to Napoleon's policy. The authority which he possessed was hardly altered, but only slightly strengthened. It was already great enough for him to wear even the imperial crown. The only question was whether this new dignity would have the significant importance for France which the ruler and his people anticipated, anticipations shown in the splendours lavished on its possessor in a civil list of a million sterling (exactly the same sum that the Constituent Assembly had fixed for the reformed monarchy), and in the creation of new dignities and offices of state, and of an imposing court. The new title was restricted by close association with the nation and its new organisation, so that it implied no claim to overlordship beyond the frontiers. Napoleon conceded that among the sovereigns of Europe Francis II, as German Emperor, held precedence of him, and even recognised the same honorary rank for the new Austrian imperial crown which the Emperor Francis assumed on the 11th of August of this year. But

the boundaries of the French empire already extended far beyond those of the old monarchy. It even included cities of the old German Empire; and Napoleon purposely recalled the memories of the first and greatest of the emperors of the Middle Ages, when on Charlemagne's day, in September, he went to Aix-la-Chapelle and visited the cathedral that is the hero's mausoleum. Like one of the old Kaisers he made his state progress through the Rhineland, in the midst of tumultuous demonstrations of popular welcome, just as if he were in Paris. At Cologne the citizens unharnessed his horses and drew his carriage to his lodgings. When eight days later he held his court at Mayence, ambassadors, and even the princes of Germany themselves, came from all sides with addresses, presents, and petitions. Once more, as elsewhere on a former occasion, he saw standing at his side as the first of the nobles of Germany, one of the Dalberg family, Karl Theodor, Archbishop of Mayence and Arch-chancellor of the German Empire. From Vienna itself there came to the Rhine an embassy bringing letters of formal recognition from the German Emperor.

Only the coronation was still wanting to complete the work. Its solemn celebration too was impressed with a national character. It was performed not at Rome, but at Paris. But here too a harmony with the traditions of Carlovingian times was preserved, by the invitation which Napoleon sent to the Pope, asking him to come across the Alps and give him consecration with the holy oil. Pius VII came. Like Pope Stephen of old, his successor crossed the Alps to consecrate this new Frankish dynasty with the solemn words of the Church. He too had before his

eyes the example of these far-off times. He hoped to win back the territories of the Church still occupied by the French, and to free the Concordat from the Gallican articles. But this was not Napoleon's idea. He wished, like Charlemagne, to have the help of the Church, but like him he was anxiously on the watch to preserve his own independence. According to tradition Pope Leo had come behind the King of the Franks as he knelt in prayer before the altar of St. Peter's and placed the crown on his head; but Napoleon did not mean that things should be done in such fashion. On the 2nd of December the Pope, as head of the spiritual order, had to wait with the Court and the clergy in the choir of Notre Dame until the imperial pair came up to the altar, from which Napoleon himself took the crown of golden laurel leaves, the fitting symbol of his power based upon victory, and with his own hands placed it on his head, and then put her crown on that of his consort. He took only the anointing from the Pope. The blessing of his marriage, performed by his uncle Fesch, now a cardinal of Holy Church, on the day before the coronation; the submission of the constitutional clergy; the abolition of the Republican calendar, were concessions arising from the new order of things. But if the old German emperors had at times oppressed the Church, Napoleon went beyond them all. He would not endure that the Pope should have any association with heretics and schisms; the Papal States were a gift of Charlemagne, and the Pope must not now, any more than then, dissociate himself from the imperial policy. In vain the Pope objected that he was the father of all believers and must be the friend of peace. Napoleon left no room for mis-

takes as to his meaning. No one but himself must command in Italy.

Already in May at Milan he had let it be understood that he could not be at the same time Emperor and President of the Cisalpine State. Now he was busy with plans for erecting a throne also in Italy. His brothers Joseph and Louis declined the proffered crown. Then he thought of giving it to his stepson, Eugene Beauharnais, but finally decided to assume the title himself, and make Eugene his Viceroy. On the 26th of May, 1805, in the cathedral of Milan, according to the ancient rite, he placed with his own hands the iron crown of Lombardy on his head. "God gave it to me, woe to him who touches it!" so ran the old formula, which he repeated in threatening tones. A few weeks later Piombino and Lucca were bestowed on the Emperor's sisters, and Genoa was annexed to France. At Vienna it was reported that the Emperor was also thinking of Venice. Two strong French corps were stationed at Alessandria and Verona.

But there was already a reply to all this, for in May, 1805, Austria was at last allied with Russia. The treaty had already been concluded on the 6th of November, 1804, and it promised to Austria the recovery of her Italian possessions up to the Adda, and the restoration of Tuscany, Modena, and Piedmont. Nay, more, the Austrian imperial armies stood ready on the borders of Venetia. It was this that had called forth the scene at Milan. But there were still many steps to be taken before Austria finally decided upon war. England and Russia were the Powers that were urging her on.

In May, 1804, Pitt had again come to the helm, and

with him a fresh impetus was given to their activity. However, almost a whole year passed, but at last on the 11th of April, 1805, the treaty was concluded between England and Russia for the restoration of the balance of power in Europe. The points on which the contracting powers had come to an agreement as objects to be held in view were the liberation of Hanover, the independence of Holland and Switzerland, the restoration of the kingdom of Sardinia, the preservation of Naples, and the evacuation of Italy by the French. But these were only the least of the demands, or rather the professed demands, which the Allies put forth in a joint note presented in Paris. That Napoleon would make such concessions they did not for one moment believe. They were only intended to be the means of making the Revolutionary Emperor appear before the world as the great disturber of the peace of Europe, and to conceal their own ultimate aims. These included nothing less than the reduction of France to its old limits, securing to England the possession of Malta, and giving her the dominion of the seas and complete supremacy in the world's trade, while at the same time Russia was to become the dominant power in the North. Poland was above all the object of the ambition of the Czar, now under the influence of his Polish Minister, Count Adam Czartoryski. Both Powers had already fixed their eyes on the programme of the future Congress of Vienna, the conditions of the Peace of Paris. Prussia too was taken into account. If she would not side with the two Powers, she was to be dealt with as an enemy. Czartoryski's thoughts were especially turned in this direction. It might afford an occasion for once more uniting all Poland, even

though it might only be through a personal union with the power of the Czar. There was no immediate result from the joint note. But Austria at last yielded to the pressure of the two Courts. The peace party, led by the Archduke Charles, and especially strong in the army, had to give way when Pitt granted the subsidies that were required, and General Mack pledged himself to get the still incompletely equipped army ready for action. The Third Coalition had now been formed (July, 1805).

Two years and more had passed since war had been declared between England and France, and yet they had not come to blows. For the first time Napoleon had hesitated to tread the path of victory on which so far he had rushed onward with irresistible strength. What was the reason for his turning from a Scipio into a Fabius Cunctator? Was he not in earnest in assembling huge armaments in the harbour of Boulogne and along all the coast from Cherbourg to the Texel, and in carrying out manœuvres with these hundreds of flat-bottomed boats that he had gathered at Boulogne? And in those glittering parades and threatening demonstrations at Boulogne when he founded the Legion of Honour? Was all this meant only to serve to conceal another object? Was he keeping the English fleet tied to the Channel, and thereby barring his own way to the British coasts, only in order to prepare for the destruction of Austria and the conquest of the Continent? Such were the statements which his opponents at the very time made against him, and which even to our own day have found a thousand-fold echo in history. But if this was the secret of his policy, why did Napoleon so long defer the attack? Why did he not as early as the

summer of 1803, or even of 1804, strike down Austria when she was still disarmed? Why did he wait so long, until the Austrian armies were in position on the Adige and the Inn, until the Russians were on the march, until England had paid over her subsidies, until Sweden had already entered the Coalition, and Prussia could hardly be turned away from it? He had threatened enough and had drawn to his side all the States that lay between. But this can be sufficiently explained through a purpose to inspire fear of his power, and to erect a bulwark against possible attacks in the rear. The only inexplicable policy would be one that might seem to have been specially devised to weld together once more a ring of the enemies of France. Such a theory indeed deserves the incisive phrase with which it is characterised by the Emperor's nephew, Prince Jerome Napoleon (who by the way was one of those best acquainted with the whole history of his uncle), and he says that it would have been "mere childishness." But it is easy to understand Napoleon's conduct at this time, if we consider it in relation to the course of European politics that we have outlined. England was Napoleon's greatest enemy, and in the spring of 1803, his only declared enemy. He must therefore keep her isolated, and strive with all his might to reduce her to a state of exhaustion before new enemies showed themselves. This alone was a policy befitting his genius and the traditions of his career. As a matter of fact, amongst those who are fitted to give an expert judgment on the point, there is no longer any dispute that at least up to the spring of 1804 he was seriously engaged in planning the attack. The difference of opinion only arises as to whether

after that date he was not more and more directing his armaments to objects on the Continent, until at last they were exclusively diverted to this purpose.

And here it is an easy matter to come to closer quarters with adversaries who are always talking of Napoleon's lust for conquest. For the more threateningly the storm gathered to the eastwards, the more anxiously must the Emperor have bent his mind to the enterprise against England. He might well hope to bring this terrible enemy to its knees once he had sent across a hundred and fifty thousand men, got command of the harbour of Portsmouth, and the river approach to London by a land attack, and taken possession of the Bank of England and all the sources of Britain's prosperity and power, while the ruin and despair of the people, disturbances in such industrial centres as Leeds and Manchester, and a rising of the Irish, might also be factors in his favour. But how was he to strike the blow? What chance would there be if the Channel was not clear, or if his own fleet were beaten, and the enemy's warships fell upon his flotilla of small craft, crowded with men and guns, in the midst of their voyage? The landing would be in itself a difficult enough operation. This would be the case even if he was fortunate in making the passage. And had he not reason to fear, especially if the Continental Powers again took the field, that England might prove to be a new Egypt for him? His power in France was not so firmly rooted that he could venture to leave matters to a Regency under one or other of his brothers. And a return through the midst of hostile fleets across the Channel would not be so easy as his voyage back from Egypt over the wide waters of the

Mediterranean. We need only consider the difficulties of an invasion of England in our own time to fully understand Napoleon's embarrassment.

Nevertheless, I agree with those who believe that the Emperor was thoroughly in earnest about his plan till the end of August, 1805, that is up to the eve of the war with Austria. Indeed, I am rather inclined to say that his energy and his enterprising spirit made him cling far too long to his plan of invasion. His idea was that the combined fleet of Spanish and French ships that had been assembled at Cadiz under Admiral Villeneuve, should lure away part of the English fleet to the West Indies. Villeneuve was then to double back, evading the English, and return across the Atlantic to French waters, set free the squadrons blockaded at Brest and Cherbourg, and combining with them, appear before Boulogne in superior force. The Emperor calculated that if he could get command of the Channel even for only three or four days, this would suffice to enable him to throw his army upon the English coast. The first part of this plan, the voyage to the West Indies, proved successful. On the voyage back, however, an English cruiser overtook Villeneuve's slow sailing ships. His object was thus revealed, and when he arrived off Corunna, he found that he was threatened by a hastily assembled English squadron. He made his way through them, but not without loss to his effective strength. Putting into Corunna to repair damages, he did not venture to go to the northward from that port, but took his fleet back to Cadiz (middle of August). We can see day by day in Napoleon's correspondence how despatches containing information or orders came one after another,

pressing close on each other, and we can almost feel the feverish excitement that breathes in every line of his letters, and we can realise his disappointment when Villeneuve, in whom there was not a spark of his master's fire, deceived all his hopes.

His consolation was that he himself had everything in readiness for turning the destructive onset of his might towards the Danube, now that fate so willed it. The preparations for both objectives had been carried on side by side. The placing of the troops, so that by concentric marches they could simultaneously appear upon the battlefields of Germany, the works of peace themselves, the roads that had been constructed, the canals that had been dug, the ships that had been built, the wealth that had been amassed in the last few years, all became ways and means for concentrating the war strength of France against the Powers of Eastern Europe. On the diplomatic side all the preliminaries of the conflict were carried out with the utmost precision. The Emperor had three notes sent to Vienna by Talleyrand. The first was on the 3rd of August. It demanded that Austria should recall her armies from Venetia and the Tyrol. In the next ten days the same demand was twice repeated, and each time in stronger terms. "You know," wrote Napoleon to his minister with reference to the last of these notes, "that I like to follow the method of the poets and lead up to a dramatic dénouement. Impetuosity is not the way to gain one's ends." Even as late as the 23rd of August, he still hoped that the Admiral would make his appearance in the Channel. But his thoughts were turning more and more to Germany. On the 25th of August came the moment when

a decisive resolution must be taken. "My choice is made," wrote the Emperor to Talleyrand. "We must now appear to be irresolute just to gain time. Once I have the Rhine behind me, I shall need only twenty days to prevent Austria from crossing the Inn."

In the summer of 1756, Frederick the Great had acted in just the same way when he attacked Austria, in order to hew to pieces with the sword, before it was ready, the hostile coalition formed against him. Three times too Napoleon had made known his claims to the Vienna Cabinet. He too was a man whose way it was to challenge fate instead of waiting idly till he was overwhelmed by it. It was as if the example of the great king, in whom Napoleon saw a prototype of himself in war and policy, was actually before his mind. Both were accustomed at times merely to show their adversaries the awful image of war, "like Medusa's head," but both too were ready to grasp the ægis shield and to hurl the thunderbolt.

On the 3rd of September the Austrian Minister, Ludwig Cobenzl, declared to the French Ambassador that Austria was concentrating her armies in order to rectify the situation in Europe as demanded by French violations of treaty rights. On the 8th of September the troops of the Emperor Francis crossed the Inn. The regiments had been raised to only half their war strength, and the Russians were not expected till the 16th of October, but the Austrians were in a hurry, for it was a question of cutting off the Bavarians, who had sided with France, and of pushing as far forward as possible towards the Rhine. By the end of the month the army, 60,000 strong, under the command of Mack, was upon the Iller. The Bavarians had

escaped, the Russians were still far away, and where the French were neither the commander in the field nor the general staff had any idea. Yet Mack was not particularly anxious, for he never was wanting in self-confidence. Presently he had reports of hostile movements to the eastward on his right flank. But he remained fixed to the place where he stood "in a complete dream," as he himself afterwards said, until suddenly the veil was torn away and he saw that he was surrounded on all sides. From west and north in superior strength the forces of the French Emperor came pressing in upon him, and while he suspected nothing they had cut off every line of retreat. On the 17th of October Mack surrendered at Ulm. As Napoleon briefly and proudly wrote to his wife, he had destroyed Austria's first army by mere marching.

Meanwhile, the Russians had reached the Inn. Nothing was left for them now but to gather up some remnants of the lost army and to retire upon the second Austrian army, pursued by Murat. They evaded him, for, to the great annoyance of his master, he had pushed on towards Vienna, instead of cutting them off from their lateral retreat towards Moravia. At Hollabrunn he dispersed a detachment under Bagration, but there was now no possibility of preventing the Russians from joining the Austrian corps that had been rapidly withdrawn from the Tyrol and Italy. So Napoleon had to follow the enemy into Moravia. His position was not very brilliant. He had to leave large detachments behind him, and had only three army corps with him. If the enemy could succeed in avoiding a battle, and meanwhile bring Prussia into the field (and of this there was at last

some prospect), they might still hope for everything. But at this moment the Czar Alexander did just what Napoleon wanted, and himself presented him with the laurels of victory. He assumed the offensive in the hope of turning the right flank of the French and cutting them off from the Danube. It was the best thing that Napoleon could wish for, and seeing at once through the enemy's plan he did everything to lure them blindly on. Leaving his right wing more and more exposed so as to draw the Russians into an attack upon it, he gathered his forces together and threw them upon the centre of the enemy, which had no cavalry with it. Broken through by the French columns it gave way, carrying with it in wild confusion first the enemy's left and then the right. Such was the victorious day of Austerlitz, a worthy celebration of the anniversary of his coronation, for the battle was fought on the 2nd of December, 1805.

We must now turn our thoughts again to Prussia, which had for months seen the storm raging around its borders, and yet had all the while stood idly by. This time she had not been left without tempters. Hardly had Napoleon decided on the war with Austria when Duroc, now High Chamberlain of the Empire and one of his inner circle, arrived at Berlin. For weeks Prussian diplomacy wavered to this side and to that between the proposals made by Duroc, and those put forward, half as a suppliant, half with an air of menace, by the Russian envoy Alopäus. The army was well equipped, the finances were in order. Into whichever scale the Prussian sword was thrown the balance must incline to that side. But all the while the King, whose power was as absolute as that

of the French Emperor, and whose people were true to him and obedient to the death, could not choose his course between Yes and No, and this less from fear than from a feeling of mistrust towards both the candidates for his friendship, mingled with the inborn irresolution of his character. When, in September, he made up his mind to mobilise his army, it so happened that it was against Russia, whose forces had penetrated into Prussian Poland, without so much as waiting for permission. And then when Bernadotte acted in the same way on his southern borders, and violated the frontier of Anspach in order to force a way through to the Danube, the King at once changed his policy. It was in vain that Napoleon had military necessity put forward as an excuse for this march made by his general. For Frederick William it was a welcome occasion for turning to his friend of Memel, and taking the line that his heart had long suggested to him. At the end of October the Czar came to the Prussian court. At Potsdam, with embraces and friendly grasps of the hand, the sovereigns confirmed a treaty which pledged Prussia to armed mediation. But there remained a shadow over the King's mind. "I have signed," he said, "but my feelings are in the greatest agitation, and I tremble for the consequences." And yet the intermediary chosen to carry the matter through was the peacefully inclined Minister, Haugwitz. Purposely delaying his journey, he did not meet the Emperor of the French at Brünn till the end of November. The dice had not yet been thrown, and the news of Trafalgar, where on the 21st of October the dying Nelson had won for his country the command of the sea, seemed even to suggest an adjourn-

ment of the proceedings. But on the 2nd of December the decisive blow was struck at Austerlitz, that once more made the Continent subject to the conqueror. It was decisive, too, for Prussia. Napoleon had now his hands free, and could play the game as he pleased. Acting as it were from an inner position, he pressed in between the parties to this weakly linked alliance. Alternately threatening and flattering them, revealing to each the secrets of the other, he scared them asunder. He was ready to leave Austria intact, and to vouchsafe peace to Russia, if only both these Powers would consent to close their ports against England. But Alexander would have neither war nor peace; he was already in full retreat for the Vistula. And now the Prussian envoy, too, left Austria in the lurch. On the 15th of December at Schönbrunn, Haugwitz consented to the signing of a treaty with France, which put her in possession of Cleves and Wesel, Neufchâtel and Anspach, and handed over Hanover to Prussia on condition that she should close her harbours against England. Austria was thus left to the mercy of the conqueror. By the Peace of Pressburg (January 1st, 1806) she had to cede to the kingdom of Italy the plunder she had acquired at Campo Formio, namely Venice and the east coast of the Adriatic as far as Cattaro. Trent, with the Tyrol and Brixen, was to be transferred to Bavaria, which was thus over-abundantly endowed with fragments from the old German Empire, as had been the case with other German vassals of Napoleon, for he was always ready to reward those who served him. The Emperor had accomplished what the old French monarchy had thrice in vain attempted. The Hapsburgs were

driven out of the old territories of the Empire and out of Italy.

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Austria lay in the dust. Prussia still stood erect. Since the Peace of Lunéville she had obtained an increase of territory such as so far long years of war had not brought to her. In possession of nearly the whole extent of the German coasts both on the Baltic and the North Sea, she ruled from Emden to Thuringia, and from Memel almost up to the gates of Cracow. Last of all she had ventured on a decisive course, and had lost by it what her great king had won for her, independence, and more than that, her political honour. Such were the ideas of patriots of the stamp of Stein and Louis Ferdinand; so spoke Haugwitz's rivals, Hardenberg and his friends; so felt in the depth of his soul even the negotiator himself, and so felt most certainly the King as he confirmed the treaty. They had allowed themselves to be cast into fetters without moving a hand.

And if now Napoleon were to make peace with England, would Prussia be allowed to retain Hanover? Was not there reason to fear that Napoleon would hand back to its owner this territory which all the while he held only as a pledge? That very winter this danger was in sight. Notwithstanding Trafalgar, Pitt was stricken even unto death by Austerlitz and Pressburg. He was already ill; the news from Moravia brought him to the grave. He had for some time been barely able to keep his party together. And now under the influence of the Prince of Wales a new Cabinet, the Addington-Fox Ministry, took the helm of the State. Immediately Fox made friendly advances towards France. He gave the

Emperor information of an alleged conspiracy against him. Napoleon received this friendly act with thanks. A correspondence followed and out of it arose negotiations for peace.

But the state of war still continued, and Napoleon therefore sought, as was his custom and as was natural, to strengthen the position he had already won. Above all it was necessary to secure quiet in Italy. There, as soon as the news of Trafalgar arrived, Naples had at once broken away from him again. While he was still at Pressburg, on the day after the peace was signed, Napoleon pronounced sentence of death on the doubly faithless Bourbon dynasty. Queen Maria Carolina and her consort had speculated on the downfall of Napoleon. Their country must be a sacrifice to the victor of Austerlitz. In vain the Queen implored the Emperor for mercy. She received no answer. Nothing was left for her but to take refuge in Sicily under the protection of the English ships. And on the 30th of March Napoleon informed the Senate that he had made his brother Joseph King of Naples and Sicily. At the same time Venetia was incorporated with the kingdom of Italy, Guastalla was given to the Emperor's sister, Pauline, now Princess Borghese; and a whole series of titular duchies with rich revenues were marked out in the conquered territories for men who had rendered special service to the Empire. For the Pope, too, Austerlitz brought a new arrangement. Napoleon did not yet interfere with the integrity of the Papal States, but Pius must hand over the outlying possessions of the Church, Ponte Corvo and Benevento, as fiefs to Bernadotte and Talleyrand, and must permit Ancona to remain occupied by French troops and

close his harbours against the Russians and the English. All freedom of action in politics was withheld from the Holy Father. Holland was still a Republic; indeed, the aristocratic-Republican party there was the same that from old times had been on the side of France. Now they had to agree to Napoleon's setting up a throne in Holland too, which he gave to his brother Louis. With much more pleasure the Elector of Bavaria and Frederick of Wurtemberg grasped the golden diadems and the rank of kings vouchsafed to them by the Emperor; Charles Frederick of Baden also, as well as the Landgrave of Hesse and the Count of Nassau, gladly received at the same time higher titles as fresh gifts from his hands; and the High Chancellor of Germany, Archbishop von Dalberg himself, exchanged the now obsolete splendours of his mediæval dignity for the Grand Duchy of Frankfurt, which was created specially for him by the ever generous Emperor. It was by these steps that the victory over Austria was finally made complete. Without his having foreseen the results thus accomplished, the dissolution of the old Empire, whose crown Kaiser Francis still wore, was consummated. When Napoleon required him to renounce his old dignity, there was nothing left for him but to fully recognise the newly formed Confederation of the Rhine. On the 6th of August, 1806, at Ratisbon he handed over the official note by which he resigned the crown of Charlemagne, and became Emperor of Austria.

In truth the realm that stretched from the Straits of Gibraltar to the pine-clad hills of central Germany was wide enough to suffice for the ruler of France, if only the two great Powers that still kept the field

would agree to peace and so secure it to him. Since Pressburg Napoleon had sought to open negotiations on the subject; and that he seriously wished for peace there can be no doubt. There actually was a day in July, 1806, when he might well believe that he had reached the end he had in view. It was when Count Orloff, Alexander's ambassador, concluded a preliminary treaty with him, which was to give Sicily to Joseph and leave Malta in the possession of England. But to come back to the point: what was to be the fate of Hanover in this case? There was just as little reason to expect that King George would give up the hereditary dominions of his race, as that Napoleon would prolong the war merely to keep the Electorate for Prussia. He had indeed strengthened the alliance with the Hohenzollerns in February, at the very moment when overtures of peace came from England. Instead of merely ratifying the Treaty of Schönbrunn, he had urged on the submissive Government of Berlin to a new treaty of alliance, which pledged it to the closest connection with France. But first of all to separate Prussia and England, then to urge England towards peace through fear of this new adversary, and finally to hand back Hanover to King George as the price of peace, would all have been a characteristic piece of Napoleonic tactics.

But Prussia was after all spared this humiliation. The Czar refused to ratify Orloff's treaty, and in England the wind changed again. The Coalition remained in active existence, and if Napoleon wanted a peace that would secure the position he had won for himself in the world he must fight once more.

We can now understand that the Emperor could have no interest in a war with Prussia, so much so

that he found it difficult to believe that, as he himself wrote, the King would commit such a folly. For he himself was completely prepared for such an eventuality, while Prussia was practically isolated. She could expect no help from England, which in the spring had declared a blockade of her coasts; nor from the Czar Alexander, with whom negotiations had been a failure; nor from Austria, which stood by, not altogether displeased to see her neighbour's troubles; nor finally from that Power which the Prussian King was able to make his ally in 1813—German love for the Fatherland and the hatred of a down-trodden people for its oppressors. It was merely the Prussian territorial State, built up out of the wreckage of the old German Empire, that was now to fight for its existence.

Yet it was still on the whole the State of Frederick the Great. The army was completely in the hands of its leaders, brought up in the traditions of its old renown, full of confidence in itself, as befitted soldiers whose standards were adorned with the laurels of Rossbach. It must be granted that, like the State, the army had become somewhat old-fashioned, notwithstanding many reforms, and although men like Scharnhorst and Gneisenau were amongst its officers, though few such held high rank. It was practically the army of Frederick the Great in respect of the organisation of the corps of officers and of the troops, two-fifths of whom were now Poles; in its methods of recruiting, and in its discipline, in which flogging and running the gauntlet still held a place. It was the mirror of the State which it had to defend, and it was just as incapable of reform. It was without a trace of the spirit which the Revolution had aroused in the

armies of France, and which, now trained and disciplined, lived on in the army of the Emperor.

Napoleon was already on his way to the scene of the coming operations when the Prussian Ambassador at Paris presented a memorandum which practically amounted to an ultimatum from his King, though it implied an expectation of further negotations. It demanded the withdrawal of the French troops from Germany, and the recognition of a North German Confederation under the protectorate of Prussia. It was not till the 12th of October that Napoleon gave his answer. He despatched it to his "Brother of Prussia," from his head-quarters at Gera, in the heart of Thuringia, where he was already on the right flank of his opponents and almost outflanking them. "I have," he wrote, "at my command forces such that those of your Majesty cannot long stand against them. . . . Your Majesty will be defeated. You will have staked the peace of your times, the existence of your subjects, without having the shadow of a pretext. Europe knows that the people of France outnumber threefold those of your Majesty's States, and the quality of its army is equal to yours." The King had asked for an answer by the 8th of October. Like a good knight Napoleon declared his intention of bringing it in person. Proud words, but they expressed only the actual facts. On the 10th of October the Achilles of the Prussian army, Prince Louis Ferdinand, was defeated and killed at Saalfeld. Only the most rapid retreat could save the situation, but even to carry out this retreat the necessary clearness of view and strength of will was lacking. And so came the battle of Jena (October 14th, 1806), where the largest army that Prussia had ever put into

the field was destroyed, and Frederick's State fell down in ruins. "It was something awful," wrote Gneisenau, who had taken part in the battle and was swept away in the terrible retreat, "a thousand times better to die than to live through such experiences again! It will add some wonderful pages to history." Well might Archenholtz, the historian of the Seven Years War, write, "*Fuimus Troes, fuit Ilion!*" Built up as with a stroke of a magician's wand, the glory of this warlike monarchy had all at once passed away. Napoleon, in fact, wished to give effect to what had been the object of the Coalition of 1756, and to reduce Prussia to the limits of the old Electorate. As early as the 23rd of October, he issued a decree which announced the annexation of all the territory of Prussia up to the Elbe. He meant to leave only the old March of Brandenburg to the King. In vain Frederick William strove to modify the Emperor's resolve, to call forth the magnanimity of the conqueror. Appeals of this kind had no effect on Napoleon. The Prussian Envoy, General Zastrow, who was sent to ask for peace, met Napoleon at Charlottenburg, when he was on the point of making his entry into Berlin. Napoleon was actually haranguing the delegates of the estates of Brandenburg, and hinting that he thought of instituting a National Representative Assembly to defend Liberal ideas against the old Prussian monarchy, and the Envoy realised that there was no possibility of saving anything. On the 30th of October he signed what the Emperor dictated to him. For by this time the civil organisation of the State had been overthrown and the army broke up as far as the Oder; Magdeburg, Stettin, and Küstrin had fallen; Blucher had been

forced to capitulate at Lubeck, and Hohenlohe at Prenzlau, and four French army corps were on the march to the Vistula. And the further Napoleon's armies advanced, and the nearer they were to the Russians, the heavier his demands became. He required possession of the line of the Thorn and Graudenz, and the fortified bridge-head at Warsaw; then he asked for Dantzic and Colberg, and even Breslau. The Prussian troops were to be withdrawn to Königsberg. And meanwhile he once more approached the Prussians as a tempter. If they would march with him against the Russians, he gave them a prospect of getting back some part of their lost territories. There was a first glimmer of the old Prussian pride and sense of honour, when the King, after much hesitation, made up his mind to reject such proposals, and to place the hope of safety for Prussia under the banners of Russia.

For Napoleon there was still a difficult piece of work to be done, and he applied himself to do it with his accustomed energy and thoroughness. If the Prussians had broken away, the Poles were ready to help him. So at once he called upon that nation to rise against their oppressors. From Berlin he wrote to the Sultan that he had subdued Prussia and was following up the advantage he had gained. In the style of his Egyptian proclamations he declared himself to be chosen by destiny to save the Turkish Empire, and he called upon the Sultan to advance to the Dniester. The Government at London had just published a proclamation which justified the breaking off of the recent negotiations, and declared it must defend the freedom of Europe against the Usurper. In reply to it Napoleon issued the Berlin Decree, the

purpose of which was to close the Continent against the trade of England.

Four days later, on the 25th of November, the Emperor was at Posen. On the 27th, Murat with his advance guard came in contact with the enemy. But now the winter of north-eastern Europe began to display its treacherous rigours. It was not so much the cold, which rather tended to make the military operations easier, as the thaws that were a source of endless difficulty, for they turned the neglected roads into swamps and limited the supplies that could be brought up into this impoverished region. At Pultusk the Russians succeeded in withdrawing in time to escape from a perilous position, and thus the scene of the decisive action was transferred to East Prussia. Here too there was a moment when the result seemed to waver in the balance, when the Emperor on the snow-covered plains of Eylau was not indeed defeated, but for the first time in his career did not succeed in wresting victory from his opponents. In order to make good his terrible losses, and to secure his line of retreat, he fell back upon the rich district of the Lower Vistula. The chances of the struggle had now become almost equal. On the Danube the Russians were fighting successfully against the Turks. Austria began to arm. The Swedes pushed forward from Stralsund to beyond Anklam. Tidings came of menacing indications of widespread excitement throughout North Germany. England gave hopes of supplying new subsidies, and was working to form a coalition of the four Northern Powers. Even Spain was becoming a source of difficulty. So Napoleon took a backward step. He sent General Bertrand to Memel, and once more

offered peace to the King of Prussia. That Frederick William, under the influence of Hardenberg, kept true to Russia was one more glimpse of light in these the darkest days that Prussia had seen. He had already lost everything except one division of his troops, half a province and two blockaded fortresses. But with the fidelity and conscientiousness that marked every step of his career, he held fast to the word he had pledged to his friend; while Hardenberg's active spirit consoled itself with hopes that foreshadowed for him in daring combinations the restoration of Prussia's pre-eminence over all North Germany.

For the moment, however, all was in vain. The French Emperor did not waste one minute, and took no more backward steps. He made safe the roads and passes between the Vistula and the Rhine, reduced Dantzic to surrender, and concentrated all his forces at the decisive point. At Friedland, on the 14th of June, 1807, he overwhelmed the Russo-Prussian army. On the same day the corps of Marshal Soult marched into Königsberg, which had already been abandoned by the Prussians. On the 19th of June the French advanced troops reached the frontier stream, behind which the Prussian division and the utterly disorganised Russian army had taken refuge.

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We have reached the zenith of our hero's career. Henceforth begins the ebbing of his power, at first so slowly and attracting the attention of the world so little, that even to-day for the most part men overlook the fact that it began at this time. It is true that there was still apparently a strengthening

of the mighty ruler's power by fresh victories and treaties, and by the extension and intensification of his personal authority, which became from day to day more despotic, till the moment when, just as he dreamed that he had reached the summit, the avenging lightning struck the giant down.

In connection with the Treaty of Tilsit, Ranke says, in a passage in his works that has not attracted much attention, that one feels tempted to criticise the attitude assumed by Napoleon at this crisis. One may indeed ask why it was that the Emperor so suddenly came to a halt in the full tide of victory. The alliance with the Poles and Turks, to which he had gone back, belonged to the oldest traditions of French policy. Russia was for the moment disarmed; for what was left on the far side of the Memel, a river about as wide as the Seine at Paris, was a disordered crowd that could no longer be called an army, and the reserve army was still far away. The officers of the Czar, angered by the alliance with Prussia, were only occupied with one idea, to conclude peace. Through his own brother Constantine they had threatened the Czar with deposition, and indeed almost openly with his father's fate. And against all expectation, in the midst of this abyss of despair, the victor held out his hand to him. And he offered him not only peace, but his friendship and an alliance which disappointed the hopes of the Poles —hopes that Napoleon had just called forth, and to which their delegates at Tilsit were still trying to keep him true, while for the Turks there came a prospect of partition between the allied Powers.

It is once more in his attitude towards England that we can find a true explanation of this unheard

of change in Napoleon's plans. There was the pole to which his policy was directed with the steadfast fidelity of the magnetic needle, no matter in what direction the storms that agitated Europe might bear him. The Continent must be at peace, if he meant to strike down the one opponent that still stood erect. For the sake of this end, therefore, he must bind Alexander to his policy, unless he meant to attack him in his own territories and bring him utterly to the dust. In Italy, in Germany, in Spain, as in France itself—in a word wherever he had obtained the mastery—he had found a way to satisfy local interests, and thus to bind them to himself. But these countries were all within the sphere of his power; they were within his reach; while by the decision he now took he left Russia henceforth outside the limits of his rule. The Russian interests which he had to satisfy must then have been much more powerful than the rest. For how else was he to bind this great Power to his system, which indeed in itself had nothing in common with the tendencies of Russian policy? Russia had interests in three directions—in Finland, in Poland, and from the Pruth to the Bosphorus. Napoleon was ready to abandon Finland to Russia; for Sweden, to which it belonged, was his enemy. In Poland he confined himself to the creation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, which was formed chiefly out of the Prusso-Polish provinces, West Prussia being not without difficulty preserved to the Hohenzollerns. At the same time the Kingdom of Saxony joined the Confederation of the Rhine. By these arrangements, as to Poland, Alexander was seriously disappointed in the hopes which had drawn him into the war, but in the actual

position of affairs he could hardly have expected more favourable conditions. But on the other hand, Napoleon gave him in compensation more splendid prospects in the Balkan Peninsula, where the Czar's share in the plunder of Turkey was to include the countries along the Black Sea Coast, and, at least in so far as Alexander understood his intentions, besides these the Straits and Constantinople, the greatest and oldest goal of Russian ambition. However, the proposed changes in the North and East were only conditional arrangements in view of the eventuality of Sweden continuing the war, and England refusing the peace that it was intended to offer to her. For this was the immediate, and in any case the ostensible object with a view to which the official peace negotiations were regulated. It was agreed that a demand should be made upon all the Courts of the Continent for their adhesion—not only on the neutrals, Denmark, Austria, and Portugal, but also on those who were still in conflict with the two advocates of peace, namely, on Sweden and the Porte. With the latter Napoleon was prepared to intervene on behalf of Russia, while the Czar declared himself ready to act as mediator with England. Such was the first act, setting forth the main lines of the drama, which the Emperor had thought out (for there can be no question that it was all his own), and which he expounded to the Czar in many confidential conversations on the famous raft in the River Memel where they first met, and after that at Tilsit. The conditions to be offered at London are worth noting; England was to restore to their original possessors the French, Spanish, and Dutch colonies that she had occupied since 1805; in return Napoleon promised to restore Hanover; and

England was also to retain Malta, the point on which the great war had broken out afresh. These conditions were incorporated in the secret convention which formed the real key to the officially avowed treaty, and they were not to be immediately mentioned in London. But what if England declined the proffered peace? In that case the secret articles of the treaty already noted were to come into force; Finland was to be wrested from Sweden, and there was to be a partition of Turkey. Austria was to be invited to take part in this last operation; but England was not only to be excluded from it, but also dragged down into the catastrophe by an attack on her Indian possessions. The armies of the allies were to march on the Indus from the Caucasus (where the Russians had prepared the way in a struggle prolonged over many years), and by the route that led across the Bosphorus. I do not know if Napoleon would have so readily entered into these world-wide plans at Tilsit if he had been able to feel sure of the friendship of Turkey. However this may be, on the 24th of June, at the very beginning of the negotiations, he had received news which must have suggested to him some doubts on the subject; for on the 28th of May a palace revolution had broken out at Constantinople, which had overthrown Selim III and driven the French party from power at Court.

Such was the Treaty of Tilsit, of which the secret articles were not accessible to us in an authentic text till a short time ago. It was of enormous importance; it was the basis of Napoleon's policy till February, 1810.

Compared with the treaty all other arrangements fall into a secondary place, and can only be under-

stood in connection with it. Each one had to accept from the two masters of the Continent whatever they might give or leave to him. Jerome obtained the Kingdom of Westphalia; the Poles, their Grand Duchy; Frederick William, the small portion of his territory that Napoleon gave back to him. And these new arrangements of frontiers were made to accord with the interests that concerned the two allies and the respective claims that their power gave them. It would have been to the personal interest of Alexander that Frederick William should remain in possession of Magdeburg; for this would have the effect of keeping the French power farther back from the frontiers of Russia, and would make the friendship of Prussia, on which he believed he could in any case count, all the more valuable to him. At the same time he himself made no difficulty about accepting from Napoleon's hands a piece of Prussian Poland, the district of Bialystok, and was in no way embarrassed about taking his old friend into his confidence on the subject. But, on the other hand, he felt disappointed when the Emperor denied him his wish to push the Russian frontier still further into Poland, for at the conferences on the Memel he had flattered himself with hopes in this direction. But Napoleon, on the other hand, could not venture to cut the territory of the new Archduchy too finely, for he did not want to lose the good will of the Poles, which might be more necessary to him in the future than at present. By connecting the new State with Saxony, whose Elector as a reward for his defection from Prussia received a kingly crown, he made it at the same time an outwork of the Confederation of the Rhine, a bastion interposed between Prussia and

Russia, which would always be at his disposal, all the more if he kept alive the national aspirations of the Poles. Henceforth he must keep Prussia down. He had, as he himself admitted, done her too much harm to be able to expect anything but hatred from that quarter. But, nevertheless, he had no idea of utterly destroying the Hohenzollern State. For he had no interest in bestowing the remnants of it on any of its neighbours, whether it might be the Poles, or Saxony, or even his own brother Jerome. After the great German Power had scorned his friendship, and thereupon suffered defeat at his hands, he saw that his own interests were best safeguarded by having three medium-sized States in the north of Germany instead of a single powerful one.

A patriotic German can think only with sorrow, and even with reluctance, of the humiliations then inflicted on his country and its King, and the greatest of these was the meeting between Queen Louisa and the Conqueror. For the worst of it was not that the State should have all but gone to destruction, but that the vanquished should have hoped through the graceful influence of this beautiful woman to be able to work upon the heart of the man who recognised no mistress over his actions but mere policy. And we cannot say that Napoleon, as might so easily happen, disregarded the dictates of good manners in his dealings with the Queen. If Louisa on the evening of the day of her first interview came back to her friends with a happy feeling that her sacrifice had not been in vain, this was a self-deception, but Napoleon can hardly be blamed for it. The blame falls upon those who had placed the noble woman in such a position.

CHAPTER VI

THE TREATY OF TILSIT

BAYONNE. ERFURT. SCHÖNBRUNN

ON the 9th of July, 1807, Napoleon left Tilsit, and after a short stay at Königsberg he travelled rapidly by way of Dresden and Mayence to Paris, where he arrived before the end of the month. He was called there by the changes in his system of policy with which he had been occupied even during the campaign, and which probably had been among the inducements to the conclusion of peace. The composition of the Ministry was to some extent altered, and a number of officials cleared out. In this process Talleyrand lost his post at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Tribunate was abolished; the department of Finance reorganised; and the French legal Code introduced into the dependent States. Public works were pushed forward with renewed energy—the construction of the roads over the Alps, the bridges over the great rivers, the canals that were to give a waterway from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean and the Rhine, and, above all, the adornment of Paris with splendid buildings.

For the third time Napoleon had given peace to France, and once more millions of hands set to work to increase the wealth of the country. On the 16th

of August, with proud words, the Emperor officially informed the Corps Législatif of the conclusion of the peace that had changed the face of Europe, and we can well understand the enthusiasm for him that found tumultuous expression on the part of his subjects. He referred to England, too, in terms that did not disclose whether there was to be peace or war, but all the more for this uncertainty conveyed a strong assurance that the Emperor was and would remain one with his people.

In August the Emperor Alexander sent to the English Cabinet the note agreed upon at Tilsit, in which he offered his mediation to arrange peace. In accordance with the secret treaty, he spoke therein of the "just and equitable" conditions put forward by France, without going into further details about them. The English sent an evasive reply: "They would like to know exactly what these conditions were." But they had for some time been preparing an answer that would speak very plainly. Since the beginning of August one of their squadrons, with a fleet of transports, had been lying off Stralsund in the waters of the isle of Rugen. Any action taken now would come far too late for the hopes of Sweden and of the German patriots. All the gunpowder that had been used from Emden to Fulda, and from Stralsund to Silesia, the Britons had allowed to be blazed away wastefully and in vain, while they were busy securing possession of the Spanish and Dutch colonies. And all the while they had been sparing of their own powder in the Baltic. At the end of August, eight days after they had given their answer to Alexander, the fleet from Stralsund appeared before the neutral city of Copenhagen, and was joined by another squad-

ron arriving from the Channel, for which it had been waiting. The landing force disembarked without opposition, and the Danish capital was invested by sea and land, and found itself almost defenceless against such a superior force. Behind the inundations that surrounded Copenhagen on the land side, the attacking force was itself protected, and could without incurring any danger hurl destruction on the hapless city. More than two thousand men, mostly unarmed and defenceless, were killed and wounded by the bombardment; churches, public buildings, indeed half the city lay in ruins; whatever was left in the dockyards was taken away or destroyed, and for the second time the victors of this inglorious strife carried away the Danish fleet with them. This was England's answer. It showed such a disregard of all the rules of international probity that even to-day few voices are raised in its defence in England.[1] The one chief object of the Tilsit alliance had been the closing of the Sound. Napoleon had eagerly vied with the English diplomats in pressing his views upon Denmark, and for a long time his troops had been waiting on the Elbe ready to give emphasis to his proposals. Now the English had been beforehand with him, and had secured for themselves the freedom of the Sound, the entrance into the Baltic. They had paralysed the

[1] *Translator's Note.*—The British justification for the action taken at Copenhagen in 1807 was that the Cabinet had obtained full information of the terms of the secret treaty of Tilsit, through its own secret service, and was only anticipating similar action on Napoleon's part. At the same time there was a serious disregard of the proper procedure, as has unfortunately often been the case when weak neutral States are involved in the quarrels of powerful neighbours. In this case England, with the command of the sea, was quite strong enough to have secured her end by less violent action.

right arm of their opponent, just as he drew it back to strike the blow.

Napoleon now knew how he stood. Not a moment was to be lost in at least securing the coasts of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, seeing that he could no longer erect a barrier to England in the North. In the Adriatic, according to a provision of the Treaty of Tilsit, the Russians evacuated and once more handed over to him the Ionian Islands. Troops, which his Italians vassals were forced to provide, were concentrated in Illyria to ensure the strictest observance of the closing of its harbours. Warships were being built in all the dockyards. In vain Pius VII demanded that the States of the Church should be allowed to stand neutral. Napoleon saw in this, not the love of peace that was put forward as its motive, but only sympathy with the enemies of France, and would not let the Pope out of his grasp. He at once required from him the cession of the Legations, the abolition of the Italian monasteries, the creation of more French Cardinals, and the extension of the Concordat to Venetia. In December the Papal Legates at Paris were forced to come to terms, but as Pius hesitated to ratify the treaty, the French entered Rome, and in March, 1808, the Papal States were made a province of the French Empire.

Although Italy remained always the strongest position in the whole system of French alliances, Napoleon had a very weak hold on the peninsula beyond the Pyrenees. The English had much the same views about Portugal as about Copenhagen. Admiral Sidney Smith blockaded the mouth of the Tagus with his squadron, and Lisbon would hardly have escaped the fate of the Danish capital if the

King and his people had not from the outset been on the side of England. But they were not strong enough to resist France, and so the royal family decided upon using the English fleet to convey them to a place of safety, and thus save their capital from its guns. For already a French corps, under Marshal Junot, was hurrying forward by forced marches towards Portuguese territory. On the 27th of November, the royal family and hundreds of their people had embarked for Brazil, immediately after an English courier had brought to Lisbon the *Moniteur* of the 13th of November, containing Napoleon's decree that the House of Braganza had ceased to reign. Immediately the Portuguese army was disbanded, money and valuables to the amount of millions were removed for safety by sea, and the imperial eagles were soon everywhere displayed.

These events had also a most profound influence on the Court of Madrid, France's oldest ally against England. And thus we approach the beginning of the catastrophe that was to be the end of all the triumphs of the conqueror of the world,—the defection of Spain, which was to be for him not indeed a blow at the heart, but a running wound in the heel of the Titan, that would not be cured, and that at once crippled his freedom of movement. After the shooting of the Duc d' Enghien, nothing brought a heavier load of guilt on Napoleon's name than the treachery he employed against the royal family of Spain at Bayonne, the demon-like cunning with which he lured father and son into his toils, and inflaming them against each other, forced them to abdicate their rights, in order to make their land his own. It must always be regarded as a most just Nemesis that he

who thus disregarded moral force, should come to experience its power precisely at the hands of the people who seemed to him to be almost the most pitifully helpless of all ("they were as cowardly as the Arabs had found them," he said). But again we may ask, could the breach between the King and his son, and their removal, be avoided? These two in any case amply merited the opinion Napoleon had formed of the Spaniards. How else was a solution to be arrived at that would keep Spain firmly attached to his system? For we must not forget that the defection of Spain from France had long been planned at the Court of Madrid, the ruling classes, like the royal family itself, were in a state of complete disintegration, and the nation itself inspired only with a longing to be freed from the burdens of the war. And we need not say what dangers would have threatened Napoleon, if all the coasts of the Peninsula up to the Pyrenees had been thus opened to the English. At Corunna, Barcelona, and San Sebastian, they would soon enough have been the welcome or unwelcome guests of the Spaniards and the neighbours of the French. For Napoleon there was only with him or against him. He could indeed say with truth as Gustavus Adolphus had once said of himself, "What kind of thing is this neutrality? I don't understand it. Friend or foe, there is no third course—*tertium non dabitur*." Had either of the two parties, whether the father or the son did not matter, thoroughly taken his side, he might very well have found some other solution. But he could rely on neither of them; for they were both counting upon the desire of their people for peace.

The French alliance threatened to perpetuate the

conflict that had brought Spain only defeats and the loss of her fleet and colonies, and seemed likely to destroy all her independence. Clerical circles had never been in favour of the alliance, and in Spain who is there that has not clerical views? Even the Government had no wish to withdraw itself from clerical influence, but it wanted to cut the ground from under the feet of the Crown Prince, on whose side were the mass both of the clergy and of the people. How little Napoleon could count upon Godoy, the "Prince of the Peace," who controlled the ideas and the power of the King and his son, had been shown already in the days of Jena, by a manifesto in which Godoy called upon the Spanish people to be prepared for a struggle, without naming the enemy. There was no doubt that he had the French in his mind, and that the whole affair had been set on foot in connection with England. Napoleon, however, after his victory over Prussia, acted as if he had not noticed these proceedings; while Godoy, for obvious reasons, denied everything, and tried to make his position once more good with the Emperor by redoubled servility. Napoleon now caused the best of the Spanish troops to be taken out of their country and sent away to the Lower Elbe, and what was left of the Spanish fleet he had removed to Toulon. In the autumn of 1807 he tried to stimulate the ambition of the Spaniards by arranging in the Treaty of Fontainebleau, on the 27th of October, for a partition of Portugal between France and Spain. In order to have a personal hold upon Godoy, he was promised the rule of part of the divided territory. The Portuguese colonies were also to be partitioned, and the King of Spain was to take the title of

Emperor of America. A few weeks after this the Princes of the House of Braganza took to flight, and the Portuguese colonies as well as his own were at the mercy of the English, but the French troops were masters of the Peninsula. And so one thing led to another. The more the French regiments turned off into the Spanish provinces, leaving the direct road to Lisbon, the greater became the anxiety and excitement of the people and the general unrest. Napoleon could on his side do nothing else than continually push forward fresh troops into the country, and this was in effect to inflame more and more strongly the anger of the people against the French policy of their Government. Already in the autumn, at the time of the Fontainebleau negotiations, a conspiracy, in which the Prince was compromised, had been discovered at Madrid. The King had his son arrested, and informed the people by a manifesto of his treason, but immediately gave way before the popular excitement, and took back Prince Ferdinand into favour, the son making this easier by asking his father's pardon. But this could only defer the catastrophe for a few months. In March, Spain from north to south was full of French troops. The capital was still clear of them, but a ring of iron was being continually drawn closer and closer round it. It was generally reported in Spain that the King and his family intended to take refuge in their American possessions, and this step was certainly contemplated. It is, moreover, quite possible that Napoleon on his part wished to drive the King to an attempt at flight, and then stop him at Cadiz, and so bring matters to a crisis, the decision on which would be in his hands. In the middle of March the departure had been

decided upon; but the secret was betrayed, and the people, beside themselves at the thought of being deserted by their royal family, and determined not to allow it, broke out into a riot. The palace of the "Prince of the Peace" was destroyed. The Queen who happened to be there with Godoy, her reputed lover, was conducted back to the royal palace, and he himself was tracked down and almost torn to pieces by the mob. The end of it was that King Charles in the midst of the disturbance declared his abdication, and Prince Ferdinand was proclaimed King amid excitement that knew no bounds.

Napoleon could not leave things so. But how was he to alter them? First of all the two kings, and their worthy friend Godoy, were liberated from the power of the insurgent populace by Murat, who commanded in Spain. But this could be only a temporary measure. Some decisive steps must be taken, and Ferdinand and his friends themselves gave a handle for them. Finding themselves actually in the power of the French, they acted as if they were friendly to them. Ferdinand asked the Emperor for his support, and complained to him of his father, just as the latter was complaining of his son. And so it came to pass that invited by Napoleon—and enticed by promises and much show of friendship, which, however, changed gradually into compulsion the nearer they came to the frontier—the Prince, and after him the old King with his wife and her paramour, seemed as if they were racing each other towards the downfall that had been prepared for them on the other side of the Pyrenees.

To understand the fateful decision that the Emperor had already arrived at, we must again call to

mind the phases of these questions that dominated all else—the relations between Napoleon and Alexander, and the conflict with England.

As arranged at Tilsit, Napoleon had at once taken in hand the task of acting as a meditator between Russia and Turkey. On the 24th of August, 1807, a treaty was concluded, by which the Russians promised to evacuate the Danubian Principalities. But they were in no hurry to take their departure. Under the pretext of Turkish hostilities they found means to evade the operation of the treaty and to drag on the war still longer. At the same time Alexander kept on reminding his exalted friend of their great plans for the East, especially an alleged promise as to Constantinople, and to launch out into the wide prospects afforded by a campaign against India. Napoleon for a long time maintained an attitude of great reserve in presence of these impetuous proposals. The partition of Turkey had been the chief bait he had used in drawing the Czar to his side. For himself it was a matter of much less consequence, and only in case of necessity would he care to come back to it. It was plain that he wanted the Turkish question to be hung up for a while. How embarrassed he felt is shown by a conversation he had on the 22nd of January with Metternich, which the latter reported to his Court. It would appear that after a few introductory words the Emperor plunged directly into the Turkish question. Only the force of circumstances could lead him, he said, to move against Turkey, that is he would only so act if driven to it by the policy of England. He did not want anything from the Turks. It might indeed be pleasant to have Egypt and a few colonies, but this would not be compensation for the aggrandise-

ment of Russia. Then came a reference to Russia's views on Constantinople. Against these Austria would find herself in need of the help of France, and France in turn would need Austria. And now the Emperor set before the Ambassador the danger from Russia, and on the other hand expressed his approval of the counter-claims of Austria to the Lower Danube valley, which he quite rightly described as "based on geographical facts." He closed the conversation by saying that for him there could not yet be any question of the partition of Turkey; but if there were he would not merely leave the door open to Austria, but would call her in, so that the two Powers might take common action to protect their common interests.

If at this time he still hoped that the tendency towards peace would gain the upper hand in England, and that his system of closing the ports of the Continent against her would break down her commerce and industry, he was soon to be better informed. At the end of January, a new session of the British Parliament opened with a speech from the Throne that was as warlike as ever. Immediately after the receipt of this news, and on the very day on which the *Moniteur* published its report of the speech, the Emperor wrote to the Czar a very remarkable letter, in which, to take Alexander's own account of it, he repeated all that had been said at Tilsit. In this letter he put forward the expedition against India as a necessity, for only great and decisive measures would compel England to make peace. As a preliminary he proposed an interview, such as had already been agreed upon at Tilsit, in view of the situation that had now arisen. All must be ready by the 15th of March, and on the 1st of May the allied armies must be in Asia,

and at the same time a Russian force at Stockholm. This would bring England to her knees, and then the two Emperors would live peacefully in the midst of their vast dominions, devoting themselves entirely to the object of spreading life and happiness through them by fostering the useful arts and by a beneficent rule.

There is no doubt that Napoleon was now seriously approaching the great plan thus suggested. Three large fleets lay at L'Orient, Brest, and Toulon ready to sail. Two of them were to make the voyage to India round the Cape of Good Hope. The third was to convey twenty thousand men from Toulon to Egypt. By threatening Sweden, making demonstrations against the English coasts, and perhaps landing in Ireland, the Emperor hoped to draw the English fleet away from the Mediterranean. Then there was to be the march of the land army by Constantinople and through Persia, with which State he had concluded a treaty of alliance after Tilsit. He thought of himself leading the enterprise from Italy. "The more I think of it," he wrote on the 17th of February to his Minister of Marine, Admiral Decrès, "the fewer difficulties can I see in it."

Now these were the weeks in which the affairs of Spain ripened to a decisive crisis. If Napoleon meant to win the East he must have completely at his disposal the country that seemed made to guard the entrance to the Mediterranean.

There is still to be found in history-books the assertion, based on the authority of a writer of unreliable memoirs, that the Emperor had already at Tilsit resolved on dethroning the Spanish Bourbons. That such an idea may at that time, and even earlier,

have presented itself to his mind among other possibilities of the future, need not be called in question, and is indeed very likely ; and he may have hinted at it in familiar conversation ; but he would have been the madman that popular imagination often took him for, if precisely at the moment when he was concluding the alliance that was to guarantee the peace of the Continent, he could have had irrevocably fixed in his mind this plan and no other. Only the extreme pressure of circumstances could bring him to it. The moment came in February, 1808, and, in my opinion, this was mainly the result of the English King's speech and the sharp change which it called forth in his own policy. I cannot venture to attempt to describe in detail how everything now developed and was carried to a conclusion. No one besides Napoleon was fully initiated into the intrigue, that is to say, made cognisant of its whole uninterrupted course. All his assistants were invariably employed in executing only a part of his design. Suffice it to say that the Spaniards made it easy enough for him, as they ran into the net he had spread out before them ; and as soon as he had them in it he pulled the string and closed it on them. There can never be an excuse for the deed that was done at Bayonne, but also there need never be any pity for the misfortune of those who were its victims—this stupid King, who had his wife's paramour for his Minister ; this Queen, who betrayed both her husband and her son ; and this son, whose brutality was only exceeded by his cowardice. There were scenes of a kind to stifle any sympathy for them. In the presence of the Emperor these wretched people poured out insulting abuse on each other, and nearly came to blows, so that Napoleon, who might indeed

forget his native place but not his duty as a son, turned away in disgust. "What a mother!" he exclaimed, "and what a son!" And now he wrested the crown of Spain from their unworthy hands. After a prolonged struggle Ferdinand was brought to agree to give it back to his father, and the latter, as its legitimate possessor, then resigned it to the Emperor. Napoleon provided the King and his wife with a couple of châteaux and some millions of francs, and assigned Compiègne to them as their residence. Ferdinand was sent to Valençay, and placed under the guardianship of Talleyrand, and a small theatrical company was brought from Paris to amuse the Prince, who, as Napoleon suspected, would be especially pleased with the ladies of the troupe.

The Emperor imagined that he had gained his end. On the 6th of June he transferred the crown of Spain to his brother Joseph. Murat at the same time took his place as King of Naples. Etruria was annexed to France. Its Queen had long fallen under suspicion, and must now share the fate of the Spanish royal family, of which she was a princess.

Napoleon wished not only to bring Spain into line with the trend of his foreign policy, but also to bring her under his political system, and the influence of those Liberal ideas that the Revolution had developed in France. These ideas were more or less favoured by the administration of Godoy, but always opposed by the party of Prince Ferdinand. A Junta of "enlightened" Spaniards drew up at Bayonne, under the Emperor's eyes, a Constitution which was to confer upon their country national representation, freedom of the press, modernisation of legal procedure, abolition of the Inquisition, and a whole series of social

reforms that were to bring all manner of blessings in their train. But then, when Joseph arrived in Madrid with a Ministry of patriotically minded and highly educated men, they found themselves in the midst of a storm of revolt. The people had already begun the rising in May, before the final scene at Bayonne. Townsfolk and peasants, urged on by their priests, assembled in every valley of the Sierras, all with only one thought in their minds—to carry on war to the knife against the enemy of Spain and of the Church, who had ruined and betrayed their King, Ferdinand ; for no one would believe in his abdication, and he passed for an imprisoned martyr. Agents were at once despatched to England to ask for help in ships, arms, and men. The Spanish soldiers deserted in battalions. Even the corps sent to the north of Europe succeeded in the autumn in making their way home from the Danish island of Fünen in English ships. The whole organisation of the State was falling into the most utter confusion.

Now the great conqueror could see with his own eyes the power of that enthusiasm, in which he had ceased to believe since it had died out in his own soul. This "ideology" did not oppose him in the forms of revolutionary France, but, on the contrary, in ways that had been characteristic of the struggle of La Vendée against the Revolution. The Spanish nation wanted no freedom that was synonymous with the yoke of foreign rule ; they recognised no other ideals but those for which their fathers had faced death. Philip II and Ferdinand of Aragon were their great kings, the Cid their legendary hero, Dominic and Ignatius, the saints they honoured. Napoleon's reforms marked out the way on which lay the future

of Spain. All that has brought the nation nearer to modern Europe, and given it new energy, has been developed on the lines of the Bayonne Constitution. But at that moment the Spaniards did not care anything about the future, and all the proposals made by the conqueror fell flat to the ground. King Joseph could rely only upon his French troops. Everywhere committees, known as Juntas, were being formed, and taking the government of their districts in hand in the name of King Ferdinand. In Portugal, too, the insurrection broke out, and Marshal Junot, with his few thousand men, found himself in sore straits. On the 22nd of July, General Dupont, with seventeen thousand men, was forced to surrender at Baylen in Andalusia. Six weeks later, as the result of British armed intervention, Junot signed the Convention of Cintra, under which he had to evacuate Portugal. Joseph had to abandon his capital. His rule was limited to the country between the Ebro and the Pyrenees.

Napoleon was hard hit. As he had written to Talleyrand on the 2nd of May, he had thought that the Spanish tragedy had reached its fifth act, and that the dénouement would at once be seen. Now he could not help being aware that a new tragedy had begun, which was yet to be followed by a whole cycle of catastrophes. He had dreamed of besieging Gibraltar, and passing over into Africa; he had believed his chariot of victory was in full career, and woe to those who stood in his way! Now all these proud schemes had been brought down in a heap of ruins. With every week there came bad news—a rising in Naples; English descents on the coasts of Portugal and Italy; at Constantinople a new Sultan on the

throne, and what was left of French influence destroyed; the barrier raised against England's commerce everywhere breaking down, so that even his brother, King Louis of Holland, was joining in the protest against the closing of the continental ports to her trade; and in North Germany, in Westphalia as well as in Prussia, a fermentation beginning among the people. Even in France itself public feeling was taking an unfavourable turn. A plot, in which some of his officers were involved, and of which Talleyrand and Fouché, the Minister of Police, became aware without at once informing their master, showed how unsteady after all was the foundation on which the Emperor's throne rested. There was agitation even among the masses of the people. And above all, the menacing attitude of Austria could not fail to attract the Emperor's attention. Since May she had begun to arm more actively than ever before, reservists and landwehr-men were being called up to the colours, and under the sceptre of the Hapsburgs there flamed forth something like national enthusiasm.

These were the circumstances that led Napoleon to invite the Czar Alexander to meet him for a conference at Erfurt. The invitation was sent in the middle of August, immediately after he arrived at Paris from the Spanish frontier and heard of the flight of Joseph from Madrid. It was the meeting that had been provided for at Tilsit in the eventuality of the plans for an Eastern campaign being brought to the verge of realisation. The Czar, so far as he was concerned, had his attention closely fixed upon the East, only that he was not now thinking of partitioning it with Napoleon, or of the proposed expedition to India, but of the Danubian Provinces, the share of

the plunder of Turkey that he had in advance selected for himself. For months he had been pressing the Emperor to guarantee these territories to him. This fresh interview offered him the best opportunity for urging the matter with his friend and ally, and so he accepted the invitation.

The days of Erfurt are generally regarded as marking the culminating point of Napoleon's grandeur. And certainly the surroundings, which the Emperor arranged as a setting for the interview, presented a scene of power and splendour such as was perhaps afforded by no other epoch in his career. What a sight it was when Talma and his company produced before an "audience of kings" on a German stage those French tragedies, against whose stiff formality German genius has been in successful revolt since Lessing's days! Immediately in front of the footlights were the two Emperors, their chairs placed side by side; behind them the glittering crowd of vassal princes with their courtiers and the ministers, diplomats, and generals. At the words of Œdipus, "L'amitié d'un grand homme est un bienfait des dieux,"[1] the Czar, himself a better actor than Talma, arose and with an affectionate gesture extended his hand to his friend; an embrace followed, and all around there was clapping of hands and rejoicing. Then there were the meetings with Goethe and Wieland; the excursion to Weimar; the hunting party on the plains of Jena. On the "Napoleonsberg," as a hill there had been named, German hands had erected a "Temple of Peace," and some minor German poet had adorned it with a couplet of verses. In front of it we see the Emperor, map in hand, describing to

[1] "The friendship of a great man is a good gift from the Gods."

the Czar and the rest of his princely audience, the course of the battle that destroyed the army formed by Frederick the Great. In the villages and along the roadsides the people of the country and of the neighbouring towns waited to see and pay homage to the great man. From Jena itself there was a deputation of the magistracy and the university. Nowhere was there any sign of a feeling of mortification or discontent. Throughout all Napoleon was the central figure in the uninterrupted series of festivities, balls, reviews, and theatrical performances.

So much for outward show and the opinion of the world!

In reality these weeks at Erfurt meant for Napoleon one more downward step. It was no longer he, but Alexander, who laid down the law. He forced the Emperor to guarantee to him Finland, which was already almost in his hands, and the Danubian Provinces, where fighting was still going on. It signified very little that in return the Czar recognised the changes made in Spain and Italy, renewed the alliance of Tilsit, and at the same time put his signature to a joint letter addressed to King George of England. It was already well understood at London and Vienna that the hostility of Russia was no implacable enmity, and Alexander did not neglect to let both these Courts have some idea of his own private feelings on the subject. He promised not to pass the Danube, and renounced all idea of partitioning Turkey, but neither he nor Napoleon had really seriously believed in this last project. But the guarantee of his possession of the Danubian Provinces, which he had extorted from Napoleon, necessarily implied a rupture between the latter and

Turkey. And at the same time, it was for Austria an additional inducement to turn against the French emperor. Napoleon had actually hoped to be able to welcome the Emperor Francis also to the Congress of Erfurt, and was in a very bad humour when, immediately after his arrival there, he heard from his Ambassador at Vienna that the Emperor, instead of coming himself, was merely sending Herr von Vincent to represent him, and that the Austrian diplomats were in every way urging him on towards a rupture. "I now understand," said Napoleon, "why the Emperor has not come. It is hard for a Sovereign to lie to one's face. He has handed over this task to his envoy." Then when he received the Austrian, he spoke quite menacingly of war, and said that he could make it terrible for Austria, for he had enormous resources, and the Czar was, and would continue to be, his ally; but he added that he did not desire war, any more than he feared it, and that he was ready to withdraw his troops, and even hand over the fortresses on the Oder, as soon as a peaceful attitude was adopted at Vienna. "I want peace and security," he wrote to the Emperor Francis. But Alexander left him alone in these negotiations with Austria; and even secretly let Von Vincent know that Austria had no better friend than himself.

Alexander also acted as a friend to the King of Prussia, "his unfortunate ally," as he seemed to take pleasure in calling him in Napoleon's hearing; and he actually succeeded in persuading the latter to remit 20 millions of the 140 million thalers at which the war indemnity had been finally fixed. But after all, the Prussian Court at Königsberg owed the relief vouchsafed to it by Napoleon in the autumn much more to

the turn things were taking in Spain, than to the intercession of its Russian friend. How often had the Prussians, since the summer of 1807, begged and prayed their conqueror to lighten the unbearable burden of the contributions levied upon them! Napoleon had only made their yoke still more oppressive, screwed out further payments, insisted on the making of new military roads, the erection of new fortresses besides those he already held, and confiscated Crown domains and land revenues. It was in vain that the King had sent his brother, Prince William, to Paris, with the offer of a close alliance and the provision of an auxiliary corps for his continental wars, if in return the Emperor would only give back the occupied provinces, and abandon any idea of further annexations. Napoleon replied that the Prussian Government could not rely even upon its own subjects, and he declined the proffered alliance. Even men like Stein and Scharnhorst had advised the King to come to an agreement with France, and Stein, in his sanguine way, had indeed built all his hopes upon it, trusting that through the re-establishment of the financial credit of the State, a foundation would be secured for the reforms he had planned. All the greater was his indignation, when the merciless victor thus rejected the complete submission offered to him. Not unnaturally he and all the patriots henceforth could only believe that Napoleon desired and was working for the complete annihilation of Prussia as a Power, a theory that henceforward inspired their policy, and thanks to this, has made itself part of the tradition of those times, so that it still prevails. But the truth was that, as has already been pointed out, Napoleon was not aiming at the destruction of

Prussia, and he precisely hit off the position in the words with which he received Prince William at Paris: "The arrangement of your affairs is subject to the general political combinations that are now in process of development. . . . Probably in the summer the important affairs will be settled." When he spoke thus, he still believed that he was master of the situation; it was in the days immediately before the crisis, that has just been described. In the summer the important affairs were settled, but, as it turned out, in a different way from what he had still hoped in the spring. Immediately after his return from Spain, he resumed the negotiations with the Prince, who had remained all the time in Paris. It was then that he got into his hands a letter of Stein to Prince Wittgenstein, that gave him evidence of the real feelings of the Prussian Ministry. The possession of this information came most opportunely to enable him to make the Prussians uneasy and to raise his own demands. Besides paying over the millions of the indemnity, they must give him possession of Stettin, Küstrin and Glogau, and their army must not exceed the strength of forty-two thousand men. How, he asked, could he trust them any longer, and what other means could he find of preventing them from rushing to their own destruction? But notwithstanding this letter, he abstained from hurling a thunderbolt at Stein; he evacuated the Prussian provinces and even signed, on the 8th of November, the treaty with Prussia. His moderation in all this shows how embarrassing the general situation had become to him.

On the 14th of October, the Czar Alexander bade farewell to his great ally, who travelled with him part

of the way to Weimar. As Napoleon rode slowly back to Erfurt, it was remarked that he was lost in deep thought, with a touch of sadness in his face. Savary noticed it, as he tells us in his Memoirs. And one can easily imagine that at this moment as the Emperor rode back, his mind brooded on his anxiety as to which way he must turn, and how all this was to end.

Only a short respite was given to him in which to reduce Spain to submission, if he was to meet the Austrians once more in the Danube valley in the coming spring. Hitherto the troops that had fought in the Spanish peninsula were mostly only newly raised conscripts. Now the Emperor sent there the veterans who had been stationed on his eastern frontiers, and they went under his best marshals, men like Soult, Lannes, Bessières, Ney, and Victor. As they marched across France they were received with the acclamations of triumph, and they went to win new victories. Germany, however, was not left unguarded. There were still sixty thousand men under Davoût in North Germany, and thirty thousand under Oudinot in the South, where the princes of the Confederation of the Rhine stood fast by their Protector, because it was for them, too, a question of defending their newly won crowns. Without delay the Emperor hurried across the Pyrenees. On the 5th of November he reached Vittoria. And at once the tide of war turned to his side. By the end of the month both of the Spanish armies, that with the help of England had tried to keep the field against him, were defeated and dispersed. The remnants of them did not rally till they had reached Andalusia. An engagement before the gates of the capital, directed by Napoleon himself,

gave him possession of Madrid (December 4th), and brought Joseph back to his palace there. During the few weeks which the Emperor spared for rest at Madrid, he issued a series of Ordinances on the lines of the reforms proposed at Bayonne. Then he sallied forth once more, this time against the English, who had landed at Corunna and ventured on a sudden advance into the interior of the country. Over the snow-clad sierras he pursued them to the coast. They effected their retreat with difficulty, and what was left of their forces re-embarked after a rearguard action at Corunna.

Portugal was still free, the south of Spain still unconquered, when, in January, 1809, Napoleon hurried back to Paris as quickly as he had come. In seven days he traversed the long stretch of roads from Valladolid to the Seine. At eight in the morning of the 23rd of January, he arrived at the Tuileries, coming before the time he had announced so that no one was expecting him. He had thus hurried back from Spain, not so much on account of the armaments of Austria, as because of the very serious news he had received from Paris itself. To the foreign ambassadors he seemed to be more sullen and irritable than ever. And he had good cause. For in the circle nearest to his throne, and amongst the highest of these, the very men with whose help he had built up his Imperial State, and on whom he must still depend even now, among the intimates of Talleyrand and Fouché, traces of an intrigue had been discovered, by Eugene apparently, or by Josephine herself. Its object was to put an end to his own power, and Murat was regarded as the successor that would be ready to replace him.

How often we are told of the growth of a despotic temper in the Emperor, who drove a woman like Madame de Staël from land to land, and trampled under foot every manifestation of independence. The reason of this lies above all in the fact that the basis on which the Empire rested was now becoming insecure, especially in its upper strata. And the higher the intriguers stood, the weaker was the position of their master against them. Nothing can better illustrate this than the scene that Napoleon had with Talleyrand, after his return from Spain. It was on the 28th of January, and in the presence of Cambacérès and Decrès. He overwhelmed Talleyrand with reproaches and insults, called him a thief, a traitor, a base villain—but without doing him any further harm than removing him from the office of Grand Chamberlain, which had been conferred on him a year before, when he left the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "I could shatter you like glass," he said to him; "I have the power to do it, but I despise you too utterly to give myself the trouble." The truth was that he dared not go so far. Talleyrand took the shower-bath quietly, and let it run off him like water off a duck's back. But all the same he did not refrain for a moment from his insidious work of sapping and mining. We now know that since the Congress of Erfurt he had already been inflaming the Austrians against Napoleon, and that he had not been ashamed to accept pay from the enemies of France. Metternich, the Austrian ambassador at Paris, was already writing to his Court of a conspiracy against the Emperor, and was advocating war with all his might. Napoleon, he argued, had now for the first time inadequate forces at his command, and even if

war was not part of his plans, Austria ought therefore to make it her policy.

It would indeed have now been a serious matter for Napoleon to avoid war. For if he did so, it would, in the existing circumstances, be an admission that he was beaten. And it must be noted that every step he took backwards was not only a step forwards for the enemies of France, but also gave new encouragement to adverse factions at home, who, though they had been subdued, had not been annihilated. The Emperor was the heir of the Revolution in this respect also, that his enemies were without end, and he must conquer or fall.

But as yet he stood forth as the unconquered, the man who knew not weariness or discouragement, inspired with the feeling of his own sense of power, and in the full blaze of splendid triumphs. Thus it was that he went forth to battle with the enemy, whom he had already three times struck to the ground.

All the preparations for the Austrian war were made with the greatest forethought and energy. New conscript levies reinforced the corps stationed in Germany, and a portion of the troops that had been employed in Spain, among them notably the Imperial Guard, were moved in the same direction. An army was also assembled in Italy. Napoleon could hope to have by the middle of April two hundred thousand men concentrated on the Danube, though this could only be done by straining the national resources to the utmost, and leaving the countries north of the Main unoccupied.

The Austrians had taken up a central position in Bohemia, whence it was easy for them to push for-

ward in any direction. And they intended to take the offensive, and were indeed obliged to do so, for only thus could they hope to make the sympathy of the German people and the mountaineers of the Tyrol blaze forth on their side. This was the meaning of the proclamation issued by the Archduke Charles on the 9th of April, as he crossed the river Inn and entered Bavarian territory; it was not merely for her own independence, but for the freedom and national tradition of Germany that Austria had drawn the sword. On the 17th of April, when the Archduke was advancing from Landshut on Ratisbon to fall upon Davoût, who had reached the Danube at that place, Napoleon arrived at Donauwörth. The situation which he had to face was much the same as that of the German Protestants, when in the year 1546 they took the field against their Emperor from the same point. Then, too, the Emperor Charles V, the ancestor of the Archduke Charles, had begun his march from Landshut on Ratisbon to win back from his opponents the Danube and its left bank. That the Protestants neglected to push forward towards the river Isar decided the campaign against them. But this was the very manœuvre that Napoleon now carried out. When he arrived, his own army was badly placed (not through his fault, for Berthier had not properly executed his orders). The various corps were widely separated from each other. But in a few days he had made good all deficiencies. He first drew back Davoût's corps to Ingolstadt, and brought up his own right from the Lech into line with him. Then he pushed forward to interpose between the Archduke and the corps he had left on the Isar at Landshut. And now he fixed his iron grip on

Charles's army. In five days he had gained his object. In three hard-fought battles the Archduke was forced back towards Bohemia, and the valley of the Danube right up to Vienna was in the hands of Napoleon. On the 11th of May he was in the imperial palace of Schönbrunn.

But the struggle was not yet decided. A few leagues to the northward, beyond the Danube, but close to its banks, the enemy was in position. The attempt to cross the river near Aspern and break through their lines had to be abandoned after a sanguinary two days' battle. Their native river had become the ally of the sons of Austria. For it swept away the bridge that had been carried across from the Isle of Lobau to the left bank, and thus prevented Davoût from coming to the help of Lannes, who had with difficulty won some ground on the further shore. And so for the first time the Emperor, if he had not quite lost the battle, had at least lost, and had to abandon, the battlefield. On the night after the second day's fighting there were terrible hours on the Isle of Lobau, where the army lay huddled together. Amongst the victims of the day was Marshal Lannes, who had served the Emperor since his first campaign in Italy, and was the only one of his old comrades in arms to whom he still vouchsafed to use the "*tu*" of brotherly friendship. But even failure could not depress the buoyant energy of this wonderful man, for Napoleon only stood up the more firmly against it. He turned all his energies to preparing for the fresh blow that he must strike, if he was to hold his own. In the night of the 5th of July he again crossed over with his army to the north bank. Once more, around Wagram, the valour of the Austrians

made his task a difficult one. It was only on the second day (July 6th), and then only thanks to his superiority in artillery, that he succeeded in breaking their resistance, and won at the same time that which he desired—peace. In vain might loyal subjects of Austria, like the faithful Tyrolese, who had risen against their Bavarian masters, cry out for the continuance of the struggle. The rulers of the State had become weary of the war, which they had been left to carry on single-handed. Without allies, without money, they despaired of being able to prolong the conflict, with their army defeated and with its ranks thinned by disease. On the 14th of October they submitted to accept the Peace of Schönbrunn, after Napoleon had slightly modified the harsh conditions he first proposed. Even so, Austria lost more than 40,000 square miles. She had to give back to Bavaria the territory acquired on that side by the treaties of Campo Formio and Lunéville; Trieste and the neighbouring Slav and Italian districts she must cede to Italy, and the greater part of Galicia to the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, while Napoleon's Russian ally was satisfied with a portion of Eastern Galicia.

Austria's hopes of rousing the German people to action had all ended in disappointment. Germany was not Spain. The South stood by the French Emperor, who was the champion of its princes against the Emperor they once acknowledged as their chief. A poor fanatic, the student Friedrich Staps, after the peace was concluded, and when Napoleon had returned to Schönbrunn, was arrested in the very act of attempting to assassinate him. But the act was an isolated one, and moreover he was a North German,

the son of a clergyman at Naumburg. And if north of the river Main, Ferdinand von Schill, Dornberg, and Duke William of Brunswick tried to rouse to a flame the smouldering hatred of the conqueror that was there more widespread than in the South, their efforts ended in utter failure. This was not so much on account of the power of their antagonist, or even the dullness of the people, as through the opposition of the Prussian Government, which was too timid to venture on a national struggle, and at the same time too strong to be hurried into it by these independent movements. For a moment, even before the battle of Aspern, King Frederick William seemed indeed inclined to give way to the pressure of the German patriots, and take part in the war. But he soon fell back again into his habitual timidity. And when, after Wagram, his advisers once more brought him to the point of offering Prussia's assistance to Austria, even they had hardly any hopes of success. It was, as they themselves recognised, all but a counsel of despair, and sprang almost as much from their fear of the absolutely inevitable vengeance of Napoleon for the isolated attempts at resistance, as from the still brightly burning zeal for honour and the Fatherland that filled their brave hearts. Indeed, it would not now have been difficult for Napoleon to put an end to the kingdom of Frederick the Great. For Alexander, who even in the spring had spared no effort to hold back the King, would certainly not come to his aid in the autumn. The English, instead of landing in the Weser, as the Prussian patriots had wished and hoped, had made an expedition to the Scheldt in the summer, with the object of taking Antwerp. It was a plan that in itself might have

proved very dangerous to Napoleon, for it aimed a blow at the very centre of his whole position, and not only threatened the Netherlands, but would also have reacted upon France itself. But it had already ended in disaster through the ignorance and incapacity of the Earl of Chatham, who had been placed in command of the enterprise. And Austria, once she had concluded peace, had neither the power nor the will to do anything whatever to save Prussia. King Frederick William was left to his own resources, exactly as he had been three years before. And how could he venture on a struggle against an enemy who held nearly all the fortresses and river crossings of the land, and had half Europe at his back!

However, nothing happened to him. It is well known what kind of a reception Napoleon, as soon as he returned to Paris in November, gave to General Krusemarck, when he offered him the congratulations of King Frederick William on the Treaty of Schönbrunn. The ambassador met with a surly enough welcome. Who was ruling in Prussia? asked Napoleon. Was the Austrian Emperor master there? or was it the Silesian (meaning Count Götzen), or Schill, or "Bluquaire"? The rabble had made the Revolution in France, the army was doing it in Prussia. Why had not the Queen advised some other policy, for she at any rate had some brains? He threatened to go himself to Berlin and enforce order. But then he declared that after all he would not make war, however good might be his right to take such a course. He wanted to come to an understanding with the King of Prussia; but if this was to be done, the King must be in his proper place, at Berlin, not at Königsberg. And then Napoleon went on to

treat the helpless man as he had treated Talleyrand. He poured out on the King the most outrageous abuse, but left him in peace. But, as Ranke rightly sums it up, his declarations were not warlike, but pacific; he did not want to destroy Prussia, but to keep her in subjection. It was with this view that a year later he allowed Hardenberg, whom he had had removed from the King's Council at the Treaty of Tilsit, to become once more the chief minister of Prussia, and though he all the while worried and pressed the Berlin Government on the subject of the payment of the Prussian war indemnity, he nevertheless permitted it to be again and again deferred.

CHAPTER VII

CRISIS AND CATASTROPHE

THE alliance of Tilsit still held good. Alexander also had become the enemy of Austria, and in accordance with the arrangements made at Erfurt had taken part in the war. However, he had not displayed much activity; and Napoleon's Polish allies, who under Poniatowski had thrown themselves with fiery zeal into the struggle, had done more than the Russians. The latter did not make their appearance until the Austrians, who at the outset had penetrated into the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, had been expelled from it, and their Polish opponents had invaded Galicia. When the Russians entered Cracow they nearly came to blows with the Poles, while they allowed the Austrians to withdraw unmolested from the place. The Peace of Vienna gave to each what their efforts had merited; to the Czar the district of Tarnopol, to the Poles the city, where in old days they had crowned their kings. The Czar, who had hoped to have the whole of Galicia, was extremely discontented. However, simultaneously with the conclusion of peace, Napoleon sent to St. Petersburg the reassuring declaration that he had no idea of restoring Poland. But, as a matter of fact, the Emperor's policy had already taken a direction that made it worth his while to arouse the goodwill of Poland in his favour. And he was actually coming nearer to the idea of looking

out for some other support, now that that which he had expected from Russia had practically failed him. And this could only be the Power which he had just conquered, the only Great Power besides France and Russia that still remained intact in all the Continent. In Vienna, too, such views were not altogether unwelcome. For while the Czar had made peace with Sweden, which ceded Finland to him (September, 1809), he was still carrying on the war with Turkey, with a view to obtaining possession of the Danubian Principalities. This was an intrusion into the Austrian sphere of influence, and that Power was necessarily more seriously affected by it than at any earlier time, for Napoleon had now forced her to look for her most important field of activity in the countries along the Danube. Thus a change in the whole situation was developing, which led to the rupture of the Treaty of Tilsit, and to Napoleon's attack upon Russia, and the first step in it was the marriage of Napoleon with Marie Louise.

At the same time this step cannot be accounted for merely by considering the state of affairs in Europe, for it had its motives also in the internal situation in France, and, above all, in its bearing on Napoleon's policy considered as a whole. We have seen indeed how hereditary right was made the basis of the Empire, but Josephine being childless, Napoleon had found himself under the necessity of naming his brothers Joseph and Louis as the hope of the new dynasty. Then the development of his policy brought with it the portioning out of vassal States among his relatives, and this system was to be further strengthened by marriages to be arranged with the sons and daughters of princely families. Thus Joseph

wedded the daughter of Frederick of Wurtemberg, Eugene a Bavarian Princess, Caroline Bonaparte received with the hand of Murat, first a German principality, the Grand Duchy of Berg, and then the Crown of Naples, and Stephanie Beauharnais married into the princely house of Baden.

But, nevertheless, the taint of upstart origin that clung to the Empire had not been dissipated, even by all this; and besides the question of Napoleon's successor had been made all the more difficult by the fact that Joseph and Louis had been given the crowns of foreign countries, and it was hardly conceivable that either of them could unite in his person a foreign crown and that of the French Empire. The Emperor had at first thought of adopting the eldest son of Louis and choosing him as his successor; but in the spring of 1807 came the death of this handsome and gifted youth, for whom the Emperor cherished a deep affection. And the brothers of Napoleon counted for less in this matter of the succession, because they had disappointed the hopes he had built upon their co-operation in his work. For, like Murat, they were, almost against their will, compelled to assert the particular interests of the countries they ruled, and this too even where such interests ran counter to the general tendency of the Imperial policy. Louis especially had become a persistent and very inconvenient advocate of the interests of Holland, which indeed were seriously prejudiced by the general closing of the ports of the Continent. Joseph was very soon at variance with the French generals, and bitterly complained that his brother would not allow him to give his subjects any part in the blessings of peaceful civil rule. Jerome, too, gave trouble, and

had to submit to his brother placing a monitor by his side in the person of Count Reinhard, the friend of Goethe. Finally, Murat fell under well-grounded suspicion of having had a hand in the intrigues of January, 1809. Eugene, the Viceroy of Italy, was the only one who remained always submissive to his stepfather, and carried out all his commands. The contrast between the relatives of Napoleon and those of his wife, which was apparent from the outset, was thus made all the more striking. But there was also a political influence that had its effect on Eugene's attitude. From the very beginning the hopes of Italy had been centred on France, and Napoleon's victories over Austria had been the best means of promoting the object to which these aspirations were directed, namely, the unity of the nation. On the other hand, in the States ruled by the Bonapartes, there still survived tendencies that divided them from France. Napoleon did not for one moment overlook the fact that as time went on such tendencies would have a deeper effect. He had indeed spoken of this with that astounding frankness which he could use when he liked, for instance, in his interview with General Krusemarck in November, 1809. He knew very well that a day might come when France would have to wage war against his brothers' descendants. He therefore felt it all the more incumbent on him to place the succession to the Imperial Crown on a firmer basis. He had as inducements in this direction not only his own personal and dynastic ambition, but also the interests of France. If the State which he had founded was to last, he must support it with a new pillar, that of legitimate succession.

Josephine had long endeavoured to avert the wreck of her happiness, which was thus drawing nigh, and she had spared neither entreaties, nor reproaches, nor tears. And it must be said that for Napoleon, too, the decision to separate himself from his once-loved wife was not an easy one to make. But at last even she surrendered to what was represented as inevitable necessity, and the Emperor did what he could to make her lot less difficult. She was to retain the title of Empress, and to have Malmaison as her residence, and she was given a Court and an allowance that enabled her to meet the expenses of her widowed life without economies.

It was more difficult for Napoleon to choose a wife for himself among the princesses of Europe than it had been to select consorts for his relatives. He would not think of choosing a wife among his vassals. For him there was question only of some princess from one of the reigning families of the Great Powers. At first, and indeed very soon after the Treaty of Tilsit, he had thought of making himself the brother-in-law of his Russian ally, who had two sisters, Catherine and Anne, to dispose of. But this project was now only a ball that was thrown backwards and forwards in the diplomatic game between Paris and St. Petersburg. But here Alexander showed himself the more skilful juggler of the two, or found better excuses than his adversary by sheltering himself behind his mother, who, as he regretfully stated, was continually raising new difficulties. Nevertheless, up to the meeting at Erfurt, he allowed the Emperor to hope for the hand of the elder sister. But he had hardly gone back to St. Petersburg, when Catherine was married to Prince

George of Mecklenburg. The Grand Duchess Anne was then just fourteen years old. Nevertheless, her marriage became the subject of further negotiations, though the Russians continually brought forward objections arising from her extreme youth and the difficulties of the question of religion. At last, at the beginning of February, 1810, Napoleon, tired of all this delay, took upon himself to inform the Czar that he no longer aspired to the hand of his sister. This happened in connection with an embarrassing development of the Polish question. Alexander had required from the Emperor an authentic declaration that in his official acts the very name of Poland should never be mentioned. On the same day that Napoleon brusquely rejected this demand (which reminds one of the well-known step taken by Napoleon III with King William over the Spanish question), the negotiations with Austria as to his marriage with Marie Louise were brought to a conclusion—so closely did the two affairs hang together. These negotiations had been going on for months, and had probably been begun by Count Metternich, who since the peace had been the leading Minister of Austria. But we may assume that he had been approached on the subject also on Napoleon's part. The daughter of the Emperor Francis was in many ways the very opposite of Josephine. She was eighteen years of age, with a fresh blond complexion, neither beautiful, nor witty, nor with the coquettish graces of her predecessor ; a well-brought-up princess, who, as the daughter of the most easy-going Sovereign that sat upon a throne, waited to be given by her fate to the husband that high policy might select for her. Once her lot was decided,

everything went on as quickly as Napoleon wished. On the 11th of March, 1810, the marriage was celebrated by proxy at Vienna, the Archduke Charles speaking in the name of his conqueror. On the 27th the Emperor received his chosen bride at Compiègne, whither he had hastened to meet her, and took possession of the easiest of his conquests. On the 1st of April the civil marriage was performed at St. Cloud, and on the following day the ecclesiastical ceremony was again carried out amidst the greatest pomp. In contrast with what he had done with Josephine, he gave the daughter of the Austrian Emperor a much more public position as the sharer of his throne and of his power. In this same spring he took her with him on his journey to the Netherlands, and shared with her the homage he received from his subjects. Later on, when there was a renewed outbreak of war, he entrusted the Regency to her. And moreover it is generally agreed that he not only ensured for his second wife all the splendours that befitted her position, but also treated her with chivalrous attention and real affection. Never had the Empire witnessed such brilliant days of high festival as in this year. They reached their climax after the birth of her son, in whose cradle the happy father laid the crown of Rome, thus marking him out, like the son of a medieval Emperor, for the inheritance of his own world-wide power.

During all this time the Emperor remained at home. For the first time he left to his marshals the entire conduct of the war, which was going on uninterruptedly in Spain. Nevertheless, he did not keep his arms folded. As before, he had everything under his own control, little and great, politics and

administrative matters, ecclesiastical affairs and education. Only a small part of his official documents has been printed, and yet we already have a good deal more than twenty thousand separate papers, letters, bulletins, instructions, and other original documents that bear his strongly marked signature, scrawled upon them with a quickly dashed off "*N*," "*Nap*," or "*Napl.*" Every day he kept two secretaries hard at work. He dictated his orders to them as he stood at the window of his study, or as he walked up and down the room, with his arm slightly bent and his fist closed. He himself was never tired when there was business to be done, and when was he not busy? We are told that in the spring of 1803 he once worked uninterruptedly for three days and nights, one after the other; then, still reading despatches, sat for three hours in a bath, and only after that gave himself a few hours' sleep. For this strong man had made sleep, too, his subject. His brain was so organised, or his iron will had so trained it, that he could command sleep when he wished. In the midst of the thunder of Wagram, on the second day of the battle, when he saw that the victory was in his hands, his attendant, Roustan, was told to spread a bearskin on the ground, and twenty minutes of deep sleep were enough to restore to the Emperor all his active energy. He was no longer the impetuous man he had been in the days before the 19th of Brumaire. The order, the organised strength that he had secured for France, was reflected in his own bearing. If as a young officer, and up to the period of the Consulate, he had not held aloof from cheerful companions, and had occasionally abandoned himself gladly to the enjoyment of the moment, the

darker undercurrent of his character, that had always been a predominant element in it, had from year to year come to exert a stronger influence over him. He had really become "the man who could not be amused," as Talleyrand had with malicious sarcasm described him. He had lost the power of laughter, and if at times a smile played upon his thin, close-pressed lips, there was mingled with it a trace of irony and a bitter sense of ridicule, with perhaps too a touch of melancholy. A flutter of anxiety went before him as he strode through the ranks of his courtiers, or as he passed into the circle of the ladies, addressing a brief word now to one now to another, as if he were giving orders, so that he was apt to offend them with his brusque and mocking ways. It was a manner in which, besides his consciousness of power, and the seriousness that always overshadowed his features, there was still to be traced something of his old awkwardness in the society of women. He took more care of his exterior than in the days when he visited the *salons* of Madame Tallien and the Marquise de Beauharnais. On great days of ceremony he glittered in the Imperial robes, which had been designed by Isabey. But, as a rule, the Emperor appeared as a soldier, and in as simple a dress as of yore, wearing the uniform of his grenadiers or that of the chasseurs-à-cheval, on his breast the Legion of Honour and perhaps some minor decorations. As time went on he had grown stouter. The short chestnut-brown hair was becoming grey and thin about his brows. His complexion was as pale as ever, and his features harder. From his blue-grey eyes there shone no longer the fire of the days of Arcola, but all the more intense was their expres-

sion of coldly watchful strength and unapproachable majesty.

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But all the festal days and all the labours of peace could not make Napoleon forget that France was still at war. At the time of the marriage the affairs in Spain were going badly. Since the summer the English, now under Wellington's command, had begun to show themselves a match for the French. In the autumn Masséna was encamped before the strongly fortified positions that Wellington had prepared at Torres Vedras, stretching from the Tagus to the sea. All through the winter he hoped to reduce them, but in March, after terrible losses, he had to retire into Spain, where the guerilla warfare had blazed up again in every province. The English showed themselves also at other points on the coasts, and everywhere there was need of standing on the defensive.

Napoleon was still busying himself with plans for maritime expeditions against the West and East Indies, and even clung to the idea of a dash at England. The work of rebuilding the fleet went on unceasingly. He hoped to have made such progress by the autumn of 1812 that he could then venture on a fresh attempt at invasion. Till then the closing of the ports of the Continent must be his strongest weapon against his inaccesible enemy. And it was hoped that this would not only serve as a defence, but also play the part of a system of fiscal protection, developing the industry of France and making the Continent dependent on it. And this object was attained in a marked degree. Wherever Napoleon directly ruled only the advantages of the system were experienced. Aix-la-Chapelle, Crefeld, and the whole Rhineland on

the left bank of the great river owed to the Continental Blockade the rapid advance of their industries. And if these districts, as well as Belgium and Italy, felt the competition of the more strongly developed industry and organised capitalism of France, the balance was set right by the mutual exchange of the products of the various regions. The silk manufactories of Lyons were especially prosperous. After suffering serious losses from the Revolution, they had revived since the Consulate. So too the woollen industry that had its chief centres in Aix-la-Chapelle, Eupen, Verviers, and Reims. Even the linen trade, which had had a hard struggle against the competition of the cotton factories, was developing at Ghent and Mulhouse. The iron industry, too, benefited by the closing of the ports, and finally the trade in objects of art and ornament, with Paris for its centre, became more supreme and more profitable than ever before in the markets of the Continent. The maritime towns were declining, but the inland cities were all the more prosperous, and most of all Strasburg, as the frontier town nearest to Germany, and to the whole region of the Danube. But all the more this commercial policy proved itself a burden to the countries whose industries were less developed, and whose products were adapted for exportation over sea, especially for trade with England, as well as for the great commercial ports that served this trade. This was the case with all the States on the North Sea and the Baltic that lay outside the French customs frontier, and above all with the countries of Eastern Europe, including all the Austrian and Russian dominions. In all these countries commercial losses and political oppression combined to make the supremacy of the French

Empire more and more hated as the years went on. And now even in France itself this overstrained system of protection began to break down. Since May, 1810, there had been a series of bankruptcies, which began in the outlying provinces, at Lübeck, and at Amsterdam. These were the first signs of commercial disturbance, and in the course of a year it developed into a complete collapse of trade and industry even in France itself. The immediate cause might be a crisis in the trade in colonial products; but in this, as in other symptoms of commercial weakness, it was clearly seen that the ultimate cause was the political system, in favour of which the one absolute ruler had exerted all his power. So even in France public opinion was aroused against the Continental Blockade. Already the Emperor had felt himself compelled to do something to alleviate the situation by granting here and there more liberal licences to deal with English traders. But he could not now give up his system of "Blockade." He tried to promote business activity by giving special privileges to manufacturers, by establishing funds from which advances could be made to them, and by placing with them orders for the State and the Court, and in this way, as well as by the erection of customs barriers on the Continent, he did at least strengthen the French industrial markets. He took these steps not so much for the sake of the employers as for that of the workmen, for his power depended on the contentment of the masses. But in the long run all this had very little effect. The stagnation of trade continued. At Paris, in 1811, things came to such a pass that relief works were established, with direct payment by the Government of those employed on them, and it was the same in the Provinces.

But in the vassal states men had already been trying for some time to help themselves. Smuggling had become a flourishing occupation, and at a hundred points the Continental Blockade was broken, and the forbidden British goods found their way by secret methods into all these countries.

Only where French troops and French customs officers were posted, could the Emperor to a certain extent count upon the Blockade system being kept up. Where people would not co-operate in enforcing it, he had to see to it himself, by annexing the refractory States, but this was not a course to which he was really inclined. He gave some proof of this in 1811 in the case of Dusseldorf, when the leading men of the place, in the interests of their business, asked for incorporation in the Empire, or at least a customs union with it. He persistently refused to grant their request. But he found that he could not afford to leave the coast districts out of his control, and thus as early as the summer of 1810, Holland was reduced to the position of a Province, and in the winter the coast districts of Germany up to the Bay of Lübeck were brought under the same regime, and Jerome learned from the *Moniteur* that his brother had taken away from him a quarter of his dominions and a third part of his revenues. The Spanish territories as far as the Ebro had the same fate. It was the old story; further and further he extended his rule, so long as no barrier was raised against it from without.

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Yet even in France the joints of the huge structure were beginning to give way. The relations with the Church were becoming strained, and their maintenance was one of the corner-stones of the new

State. Since 1808, when Napoleon had occupied Rome and the States of the Church, the Pope had declared himself hostile to him. Pius VII openly showed his sympathy with the rising in Spain. It had hardly broken out when he protested against the violence done to his own States, and forbade the bishops in the annexed Legations to take the oath of allegiance to the Emperor. In reply, Napoleon, in April, 1809, immediately after his first triumph at Schönbrunn, proclaimed the States of the Church a province, and Rome a free city of the Empire. On the 10th of July the Pope was informed of what had been done, and was told that he had been placed under a Law of Guarantees, an income of two millions of francs assured to him, and that he would be left in possession of his property and palaces. A bull of excommunication had long been ready. Before sunset the Pope had signed it. Napoleon did not delay his reply a moment. Treating the bull as a call for revolt against him, he made the Pope a prisoner, and had him taken first to Savona, and then to Grenoble. It was in the very hour when the cannon were thundering at Wagram that the French troops forced their way into the Quirinal. Pius had counted upon the victory of Austria, but the ordeal of battle had declared against him. The Cardinals and the Monsignori, the Generals of the religious orders, the Papal officials and the archives were brought to Paris. In February, 1810, the Senate decreed the union of the States of the Church with France. A national council of bishops was directed to give effect to the Emperor's will. Opposition was not lacking in its ranks, but Napoleon would brook no contradiction. In June, 1811, he

assembled a body of French, Belgian, and Italian prelates. Those who opposed him were in part silenced by being thrown into prison, and the rest of the fathers voted the Decree which the Emperor dictated to them, and which gave the archbishop of each ecclesiastical province the right of instituting a bishop named by the Emperor, in case the Pope should withhold his approval for more than six months. Pius was broken down; under the strongest pressure, and with bitter grief, he gave up the right that had been his last weapon. He, too, was now numbered among those the Emperor had vanquished.

It was with reluctance that Napoleon allowed himself to be drawn into a course that threatened to bring him back to the methods of the Jacobins. For by so doing he was placing himself in more and more open contradiction with the policy on which he had founded his throne. But so fate would have it; he who embodied the system that was meant to be the end of the Revolution, must, if he was to maintain this system in being, have recourse again to the methods which the Revolution had adopted in days of aimless terrorism.

But the army, too, the immediate support of the imperial power, had become somewhat unsteady. Most of the veterans who had conquered at Marengo and Austerlitz lay under the sod, or were nursing their wounds at home. The mass of the army was now made up of recruits provided by the conscriptions which the Senate obediently decreed. It was with these that Napoleon had fought his latest battles against Austria. Like everyone else in the country, both officers and soldiers were longing for the end of this everlasting warfare. As early as the days of

Tilsit this had been one of the Emperor's motives for concluding peace. Regular raids had to be organised to bring back the deserters to the colours. The Chouans, too, made their appearance again in the western provinces, and the Royalists would not stop their plotting with England. It was only through brutal severity that these disorders could be suppressed, but it was not so easy to keep down the feeling of disaffection from which they arose. So the rift between the Government and the nation, that seemed to have been closed since the 19th of Brumaire, began to reopen, and the people were becoming alienated from their ruler. It was precisely those who stood nearest to him, the ministers, the marshals, and the Emperor's own brothers who were the first to mark the coming danger. This was natural, for they had the most to lose. And so, like Wallenstein's officers, some of them held themselves in readiness to quickly abandon the ship the moment she ran on the rocks, or even to throw the helmsman overboard. Talleyrand, who of them all had the keenest eye for the trend of things, thought he saw a way to extricate France from this terrible dilemma. It was that which he later adopted, and which, for himself at least, was only practicable at the cost of treachery and dishonour to his own name. Napoleon himself was far too clear-sighted not to be aware of the alienation of public feeling and the weakness of his system, and it is impossible that he could have believed that his protectorate over half Europe could last for ever. It was an organisation for defence, which he would perhaps need to change if policy required it. He clung all the more closely to France, and strove all the more to make her strong.

We must never lose sight of the fact that Napoleon wished to give a national character to his crown. As in economic questions, so in everything else, he put the interests of the "*grande nation*" in the first place. It was for this he gave the crowns of foreign lands to his brothers, for the first thing that he expected from them was that they would be ready to manifest in all their policy "a French spirit." When after the Peace of Vienna the Institute suggested that in memory of it the Emperor should be given the title of "Augustus" or "Germanicus," he declined the honour in words that were as proud as they were aptly chosen. Augustus, he said, had only won the single battle of Actium; Germanicus was interesting to the Romans merely on account of his misfortunes; the only title he could care for was "Cæsar," and that had been dishonoured by a crowd of petty princes; let his title be simply Emperor of the French. Napoleon also saw quite clearly that there would be no place for him in a France conformed to the old balance of power in Europe, and which did not dispute England's command of the sea. It was only the Bourbons who could make a peace that would put France back to the position of 1792. "One must be a legitimate prince," he once wrote with bitter sarcasm to King Frederick of Wurtemberg, "to be able to make up one's mind to sign away the half of one's subjects." And could one possibly expect of this Titan, who had lifted the world from its hinges, that he himself would put it back again in its old position, and destroy the work that his mighty strength had built up, and then withdraw like an actor leaving the stage? "I have made for myself an Empire, and I will keep it," he said to an

envoy of Lucien. "Even if the skies should fall," he said to his brother, "I will not change my view." "I am not going to yield to you, after having conquered Europe. He who is not for me is against me. If you will not be a supporter of my system, you are my enemy, and Europe is too small for us both." "Let my system only make way, and I care not if I am considered unjust and merciless." But he was not a tyrant in the sense that he could bear no contradiction. He allowed himself to be carried away by his irritability, which increased with years, but when it had passed off he was ready to make excuses for himself, even in writing, and using the most courteous terms. He was ready to listen to and discuss arguments calmly put before him. He was also, as has been said before, not cruel by nature, and he was grateful to those who attached themselves to him. But he knew no mercy, and shrank from no brutality once his interests and his system were at stake, and the ends he had in view seemed to make such a course necessary. Then he had only the methods of Binasco—"*Il faut brûler, fusiller, faire la terreur*"—to burn, shoot, terrorise. At no time were these sanguinary orders more multiplied than during the first months of the Spanish rising, in 1808 and 1809; in the following years they were much less numerous. He called this energy, and it was "womanish weakness" when his generals neglected to make examples at his orders. It was only thus, he said, that one could earn public confidence; "The rabble love and respect only those whom they fear, and it is only by making yourself feared by the rabble that you can win the affection and respect of the nation." It was thus he wrote to King Joseph in

1809. "One must be strong in order to be good," he wrote on another occasion, a phrase we already know from one of our extracts from the *Discours de Lyon*. But the result of the system was that what Napoleon described as "the rabble" ("*canaille*") came gradually to include higher and higher classes of the people, until at last no one under his rule could breathe freely. This he himself once admitted, when he had Chénier imprisoned for speaking too freely. "The time is past for jesting," he said, "let him keep quiet. That is the only right he has." But whoever helped him, he helped in return; even when he knew that he could hardly rely upon him, and that his favour was given to one who was unworthy of it. Of Masséna and his like, he said, "I will make him so rich that he will steal no more." He trampled under foot every force and aspiration that needed freedom for its growth; he gave free play to base and brutal instincts, and himself became more and more full of that contempt for mankind, which had been latent in the depth of his soul even as a young man.

He had acknowledged the power of destiny over himself, even when he inscribed upon his banner the proud device "*braver la mort et le destin*." Since then he had felt more and more heavily the burden upon him of the circumstances in which he was placed. In various ways he confesses to this feeling of dependence on the inevitable. "I am the greatest slave among men. The master I must obey has no heart. It is the force of circumstances and the nature of things." Thus he wrote to Frederick of Wurtemberg, who was himself a typical despot. So, too, he saw in his policy "the star he wished to follow so long as he

must follow it." He would carry on the struggle with fate to the end, were it only in order to be the executor of its stern commands.

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In October, 1810, Napoleon called upon the Czar to put into force in Russia also the Decrees, that had been issued all over the Continent against the importation of English goods under neutral flags. There was no doubt that neutrals, namely Americans, were shipping English goods into Russia, and to stop this would have been a severe blow to English trade. Alexander replied that in accordance with the Treaty of Tilsit he would keep his ports closed against all non-neutral ships ; but he could not venture to break with neutral States, and his people could not do without colonial produce. After the French annexation of the North Sea coast, by which Oldenburg, whose ruling house was related to the Czar, was also a sufferer, Alexander followed up this step by issuing in the last days of the year a Ukase imposing a high customs duty on silk and wine, that is, on exclusively French products. In reply to a protest from the Emperor, Alexander explained that this measure was necessary on financial grounds. The very ill-tempered correspondence that followed led to Napoleon's openly declaring in April, 1811, that a reconciliation of Russia with England would mean war with himself. This attempt on the part of the Czar to make the Continental Blockade unworkable for Russia and thereby for the whole of the East, was nevertheless in reality, however necessary it might be for Russian trade, a pretext put forward by the St. Petersburg Government to justify a change in its policy. Since the summer of 1810 the Czar was resolutely look-

ing forward to a breach with his friend of Tilsit. In the spring of 1811, as Napoleon only found out later, he was even on the very point of pushing on or dragging Prussia with him into the war. The key-word to Alexander's policy was an old one, inherited from the policy of his grandmother Catherine the Great—Poland. He could not endure that the French Emperor should erect on the Vistula a barrier against Russian ambition. Although Napoleon, who was not very well informed as to the course of events by his Ambassador at St. Petersburg, the Duc de Caulaincourt, could not see all the underground workings of the Russians, he nevertheless perceived the danger and the need of being ready to meet it. This was amongst the reasons for the annexations which he carried into effect at the end of 1810. Napoleon felt that he must occupy a position from which he could at once come to close quarters with the ruler of Eastern Europe. He could not leave any intervening State in which Russia might get a footing. He hoped that he had won Austria to his side by his marriage. In Sweden, in the year 1810, there had been a change of rulers, which gave his relative Bernadotte the prospect of wearing its crown, a change in the situation, from which, notwithstanding old rivalries between himself and the marshal, he hoped at once for help for himself. But above all Prussia was important, because the way to the Russian frontier lay through its provinces. She must be brought into such a position that it would be impossible for her to bar the march of the French armies. Hence arose for the Berlin Government a situation which inevitably compelled it to openly take sides with one or other of the two great Powers. We are quite certain that

Napoleon was bent neither on making Prussia his enemy, nor, as the patriots thought, on annihilating her; though he may have already been counting upon future combinations that might make the exchange of one or other of her provinces appear advisable to him. But he must bind her policy, and bring it completely under his control, so that it could not suddenly break away from him, and that he might be assured of at least free passage for his troops, and if possible direct help. And he gained all this by a line of action by which he now made the Court of Berlin anxious, now brought pressure to bear, now sprung a surprise upon it—tactics which no one understood as he did—finally forcing it to side with him. On the 24th of February, 1812, a treaty was signed, which bound Prussia to France offensively and defensively, and promised the Emperor free passage for his troops through the Prussian provinces, and an auxiliary corps of twenty thousand men.

The question has often been raised whether Prussia took the best course in this difficult crisis, and whether she could not have drawn the sword against the conqueror of the world. We cannot discuss here the point as to which of the leading men of the Berlin Court gave the right advice, the King, or Hardenberg, or Gneisenau, Scharnhorst, and their friends. We should have to make use of more "ifs" and "buts" than befits the historian, whose business it is to tell what happened, and not what might have happened. We shall only call attention to one point. If Prussia had acted otherwise, the theatre of war would not have been between the Niemen and the Volga, but between the Niemen and the Elbe, close to the frontiers of the French Empire, in the midst of its

vassal States, the rivals of Prussia, in a country that was quite poor and exhausted, the roads, rivers, and fortresses of which were in Napoleon's possession, so that he could freely bring up supplies. And what if Alexander had advanced to the Elbe and beyond it? It was not friendship for Frederick William that led him to make war, and it was not as a defender of German interests that later on he crossed the frontiers of Russia and led his armies to the Rhine and to Paris. On this occasion it would have been difficult for him to go farther than the frontiers of the old Polish kingdom extended. And would he have given up Posen and West Prussia if he once occupied them? Enough of this discussion. Alexander had delayed so long, that the treaty with Prussia enabled the French Emperor to place his base of operations on the Niemen. Napoleon thus found himself at the very point from which he had turned back in July, 1807. Sweden had not yet definitely declared her policy. It was not till August that Bernadotte concluded the Treaty of Abo with Alexander, and thereby took the Russian side. For Napoleon had not been able to pay him the price which he demanded, the cession of Norway, because the Emperor did not wish to injure Denmark, the only one of his allies that was thoroughly honest with him. But Alexander was ready to guarantee Norway to Bernadotte, who, as heir to the Swedish throne, was anxious thereby to strengthen his position at Stockholm. Moreover, Napoleon could no longer count on the help of Turkey, which, defeated and tired of the war, had in May agreed to a peace that left her the Danubian Principalities. But his hope of drawing Austria to his side was fulfilled.

On the 14th of March, at Paris, Prince Schwarzenberg signed a treaty, which pledged his master to provide an auxiliary corps, on condition of being promised an increase of territory.

At Dresden, in May, the Emperor assembled the German princes around him; King Frederick William had come from Berlin, the Emperor Francis from Vienna. Napoleon's wife was there beside her mother. It was an unexampled triumph for Napoleon. It quite threw Erfurt into the shade. The words he addressed to the King, and which are now generally given such an unfriendly meaning, "Are you a widower?" were not meant to insult Frederick William, though he was not in any way in sympathy with him. It was merely a touch of that curt, awkward manner that we know was characteristic of him. A letter of Prince William of Prussia, which expresses his delight at the festivities and the general jubilation of these days at Dresden, makes express mention of the friendliness shown by the Emperor. In this princely society there was no trace of the feeling with which we now look back to these days. When the time came for departure everyone was regretful; Napoleon spoke to each of the princes and princesses; and himself seemed moved.

Behind him stood forces such as no ruler had ever had at his command. We must go back to the earliest times with their legendary stories to find mention of armies so numerous as that which here actually stood ready under arms. The French themselves formed only a part of it, three divisions under Davoût; but hardly one of the allies was missing. The Germans mustered strongly in the corps that fought under the French Emperor's eagles, making

up not only the Austrian and Prussian contingents that formed the right and left wings, but also helping to fill up the cadres of the Grand Army that fought under Napoleon's immediate orders.

On the 28th of May he left Dresden. Four weeks later, on the 23rd of June, at eleven o'clock at night, the various corps began to cross the frontier river, exactly five years after he had first reached it at Tilsit. But overwhelming as were the forces which, to use his own expression, were pouring like a mountain torrent over the Russian border, and with which he meant to hurl himself upon the Russian army, it was no part of his plan to bring upon the Czar the fate of the Bourbons, or even that of the Hohenzollerns. He wished only so far to subdue him as to have full scope to make an end of his own enemy in the west. He would have deprived him of his Polish possessions, and probably of the Baltic provinces also. But that even now he was not thinking of a complete reunion of the Polish provinces, is shown by the coldness with which he received the proposals and petitions of the Polish National Assembly. Though he directed his march towards Moscow, its occupation was not necessarily the end that he meant to attain. It would have sufficed for him to shake the power of the Czar in a few battles. And the Russians, on their side, had not the old Scythian tactics in their minds as they retired farther and farther before the advancing masses of the French. They were thinking rather of Wellington's example in Portugal, and hoped meanwhile to make ready an entrenched camp on the Dwina, against which the enemy might break off his horns. The retreat they made was an involuntary one, and distrust and dissensions among their leaders

accompanied it. But the farther Napoleon pushed forwards the greater were the difficulties of the campaign, not only from the weather, which at first was hot, and then rainy, and from the rude poverty of the country, but quite as much from the ever-increasing effect of the lack of organisation. At last, on the 5th and 6th of September, before the gates of the Russian capital, there came the great battle of Borodino. Both armies had longed for it, and on both sides it was contested with unequalled stubbornness. It was the most sanguinary battle that Napoleon had so far fought. But once more he bound victory to his eagles. The Russians had to give way. They abandoned their capital to the victor, and took up a position to the south-east of it.

At last Sisyphus saw his goal within his reach. One inch, one effort more, and he would have pushed the block of stone to the summit. And then, with the whole Continent at his feet, he could hurl his bolt where he willed, against the Indies, or towards the Bosphorus and the Nile, or against the capital of that formidable enemy, on whose white cliffs, gleaming in the distance, he had so often looked out in vain across the sea from Boulogne.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CATASTROPHE

ON the 14th of September the French entered Moscow, just as the city had been forsaken by its inhabitants. Napoleon himself arrived on the following day, and took up his quarters in the Kremlin. There was no lack of provisions and forage at first, and it was possible to live there in comfort. Presently fires began to break out, now here, now there, without arousing much attention or giving anxiety. Soon, however, they began to multiply, blazing forth simultaneously, and combining to form veritable conflagrations. Incendiaries were caught in the act and shot. It became clear that what was happening was not mere accident. The flames grew in volume, a strong east wind helping the work of the Russian patriots by carrying along the sea of fire in and out of the wooden houses of the city in the direction of the Kremlin. The Emperor threaded his way through a maze of streets to a neighbouring villa, whence he gazed upon the scene of destruction. "What a terrible spectacle!" he exclaimed. "These Russians are true Scythians!"

Napoleon had only sought to induce Alexander to return to the Tilsit arrangement. So he now asserted in letters which he had conveyed to the Czar and to the Russian General Kutusoff, whom he requested to

bring home to his Imperial master the peaceful intentions by which he (Napoleon) was animated. Kutusoff made reply that the word "peace" was not to be found in his instructions, that he could but put the proposal before the Czar. Alexander vouchsafed no answer. Napoleon waited in vain for five weeks that cost him dear, until October. The flames had been extinguished by the 20th of September, but the Russians meanwhile were being reinforced on all sides. Kutusoff had made another attack, and had inflicted severe losses upon Murat. The French army, already reduced by one-third since Borodino, was now utterly disheartened; the supply of provisions had almost given out, and communication with France had been well-nigh cut off. If there was to be any further delay, the situation in Egypt after Aboukir would be reproduced with the added hardships of a Russian winter. There was no help for it —the moment had arrived for the retreat. There were three routes available: one, leading to St. Petersburg, was not to be thought of; the central one, and shortest, led through provinces that had been completely exhausted; the most southerly route, although the enemy was upon its flank, was the one to be taken. On the 24th of October, however, Eugene met with so serious a reverse, that, after all, the deadly line of retreat through the devastated and exhausted districts had to be followed. The autumn had been a mild one, and the roads were the worse in consequence. Since the beginning of November there had been hard frost at night, and the pangs of hunger had been intensified by the exposure of the men in their scanty clothing to the cold. All around were bands of Cossacks and armed

peasants, able to move about more rapidly than their exhausted foes. At Wiasma there was a battle involving great loss of life, and Davoût's corps was almost annihilated. Then on the 6th of November the winter began in real earnest. Snow and ice rendered progress all but impossible. The horses, by this time the only food of the army, died by the score; the cannon remained stuck fast in the ground; the men fell victims to the frost in hundreds. On the 9th they reached Smolensk, where there were stores of provisions, but these lasted only for a week. It was out of the question to winter in the ravaged city. The alliance with the Poles had become imperilled, since Victor and St. Cyr, whose task it had been to support them, had been fallen upon and routed. Accordingly, on the 13th of November, a fresh start was made, sick and wounded being left behind in thousands to the vengeance of the enemy. The cold grew steadily more severe, and at every difficult point on the route the Russians came on. Whoever fell out of the ranks was lost. The army melted away. The Dnieper was frozen over, so its passage was effected satisfactorily. The weather now became milder, but though the retreating army was now on Polish ground, there was no sight of friends. Nothing but Russians everywhere. And the knee-deep mud was proving almost a greater hindrance to marching than either the snow or ice. Now came the grimmest incident of the campaign, the crossing of the Beresina on the 27th and 28th of November. The bridges had been broken by the enemy, the pontoons were far behind, and there were two Russian armies on the spot. That, in spite of everything, Napoleon should have managed in such

conditions to make his way through the overwhelming forces arrayed against him on both banks of the river, and get the bulk of his men over two trestle bridges, is one of the most striking proofs of his military genius. No pen, however, can depict the terrible scenes that were now enacted, as the sick and wounded tottered along after the main body of the retreating army, under the increasing fire of the Russians—scenes more terrible than anything in the canvases of Verestchagin. The cold, which now became more intense than ever, combined with hunger and typhus to complete the work of destruction, and it was but a broken remnant of the great army that at last reached the Niemen and the Vistula. Napoleon had parted from the army eight days after the crossing of the Beresina; on the 5th of December he took his seat on the sledge that was to carry him hot-haste—accompanied by the Duc du Caulaincourt—to Germany across Polish territory; on the 14th he was at Dresden, on the 18th he reached Paris. This move was dictated not merely by Mallet's abortive revolt, news of which came to him so far back as the 23rd of October, at Smolensk, but by the general condition of affairs in France. The great campaign was over. He had done all he could as General. But he was more than a General—he was an Emperor. He had now to strengthen again the foundations of his dominion and prevent them from giving way.

Not for a moment did he think of giving up an iota of his power or of the aims that he had set before him. But he saw that now more than ever he must depend upon France. It was an advantage to him that in the Russian campaign he had economised the

resources of the home country. There were indeed only a few regiments of veteran soldiers in France, but there was no lack of National Guards and recruits, and once Napoleon was home again everything was at his beck. The Senate agreed to the calling out of the conscripts of the following year in addition to those of 1813, and what had been left by the last four conscriptions. To these were added eighty thousand National Guards, so that altogether he had at his disposal more than half a million of his French subjects. The untiring energy of the Emperor also got together horses, guns, and above all, money, even though difficulties had to be met and compulsion employed. The nation still stood by its ruler, although one could hardly say that it showed any enthusiasm. Yet it was determined to maintain the place of power that the Emperor had won for France. The Decree of the Senate on the conscription was the answer to the news of the defection of Prussia. Napoleon declared to the Prussian ambassador that the French would follow him unhesitatingly; if need be he would arm the women. The army was full of young soldiers, hardly yet welded together, for the recruits actually began their drills as they marched into Germany, but it was soon completely at the command of its great leader. Even in the first encounters the young conscripts fought with the vigour of old veterans.

His vassals, too, still stood by him, above all the Italians, who had much more to hope for the future of their country from France than from Austria. At Munich there was a moment of hesitation, for nearly thirty thousand Bavarians had been buried under the snows of Russia, but Bavaria soon made

up its mind to send a division to the Grand Army. The Courts of Stuttgart, Karlsruhe, Frankfurt, and Wurtzburg were faithful to their protector. They were almost readier than the Emperor's own brother at Cassel, and indeed the ground under Jerome's feet was more shaky than was the case with his friends of the Confederation in South Germany. Saxony too, with the enemy at its gates, and its rule in Poland already overthrown, felt a slight movement of national enthusiasm ; nevertheless, the first victory won by Napoleon convinced it of the righteousness of the French cause.

Napoleon's original idea was to assume the offensive at the beginning of May ; he meant to push forward by Stettin on Dantzic, where Marshal Rapp was in position with thirty thousand men. He thought he would thus transfer the theatre of war to the lower Vistula on the borders of Poland and East Prussia, and so be able to repeat the campaign of 1807. He still made no account of the power of Prussia ; for how could he then imagine that this ruined State would rise from the earth in such giant might ?

He was forced to abandon this plan by the progress of events on the eastern frontiers of Germany, since General York concluded with the Russians at the mill at Poscherun, the convention that at once withdrew the Prussian contingent from the war. Schwarzenberg had acted in the same way when he abandoned Warsaw to the Russians and retired southwards with the Austrians, but in his case the same results did not follow that ensued from York's action. For the Austrians had taken up in Bohemia a position on the flank of both the opposing forces, and this

would enable them to threaten or to support either of them. At the same time this was an additional motive for Napoleon's aiming his blow at the centre of the enemy's position, and he was drawn to this course also by considerations arising out of the attitude of his German allies, especially the Saxons, and, above all, by the rapid progress of the German rising, which was already extending beyond the Elbe, and which expected powerful aid from Bernadotte's entrance into the theatre of war as an ally. On the whole, his system had at the outset shown itself equal to the test, and Napoleon could therefore count upon having Europe, from the Ebro to the Carpathians and the Elbe, at his back, and on being able at once to carry the war beyond the frontiers of the Confederation of the Rhine into the region of the Oder and the Vistula, where he could join hands with his garrisons shut up in the fortresses, and with his Polish friends. If we consider the situation in this light, we can imagine the anxieties that beset the Prussian Court at Berlin, and even after it had been transferred to Breslau, and the King's hesitation in presence of a decision on which the very existence of the reigning house and the State must be staked; for it was not Napoleon's way to forgive more than once. It is true that the miserable wrecks that had come across the border from the snowy plains of Russia could soon have been swept away, and it was an easy matter to raise a revolt along the Elbe; but the fortresses were still in the hands of the oppressor, and the enemy's frontiers were close at hand, nearer even than those of the friends of Prussia, who seemed to be in no hurry to cross their own border lines. So long as attention was given to weighing only the

chances, for and against, arising out of the political situation and the military forces on both sides, there was every reason for apprehension; and if we limit our consideration to these points, it must still remain even for us an open question whether after all the King did not take a sounder view of the position than those hot-headed men who thought they could not urge him soon enough into the conflict. This, however, is not the standpoint from which we must judge the attitude of Prussia, and the decision adopted by its ruler. We must rather take a point of view that looks beyond the outer aspect of things, and take into account factors that cannot be reduced to measure and number, and which were then barely showing themselves on the surface, and were hidden from the King and all those who counselled prudence and, indeed, were hardly consciously grasped in their full scope and depth even by those whose hearts they were already inspiring with enthusiasm. The time was come when deeds were more helpful than prudent calculation; when the energy that men put forth would create fresh energy; when hope of victory and reliance upon oneself could neither falter nor go astray, if only they rested on faith in all that was most precious to the nation, and on God who would not abandon his people.

Hitherto Napoleon could say to himself that the ideals of the century were on his side. He had given scope to them in Italy and Poland, in Spain, and even in Germany, and he had asserted them in France against the pressure of reaction. It was rather anger against the Bavarian officials and tax-gatherers, opposition to their exactions and irritations, that had roused the peasants and herdsmen of the Tyrol to

take up arms in their mountain passes against the enlightened bureaucracy of Munich, and which inspired their stubborn resistance and their unasked for fidelity to the Austrian Emperor. No singer of freedom like Schenkendorf and Körner fought in their ranks; no war-song of the Tyrol found its way into German literature, which, on the other hand, ascribed to the innkeeper Hofer, words and ideals to which he and his people were strangers. It was only in North Germany, illuminated with the full noonday splendour of its classical epoch, that there could blaze forth this pure flame of enthusiasm, in which the national hatred for the oppressor was allied with faith in all that is most precious to mankind.

And now for the first time Napoleon was to feel what the "Ideologists" could accomplish. It was when these "armed peasants" (for so in his pride he described the rising of the youth in Germany), hurriedly organised and badly armed, flung themselves upon his flank on the field of Lützen (May 2nd, 1813). Once more victory remained on his side, but it was dearly bought, and the enemy left not a gun, and very few prisoners, in his hands. Within three weeks they opposed his march again at Bautzen (May 21st). This time it was only with difficulty that they escaped an outflanking movement that would have ended in utter disaster, and for a moment there was some perplexity at the head-quarters of the allies. A third victory, which could have been more easily won than these two successes, might well have proved a new Austerlitz for the conqueror, and would have shattered the Fourth Coalition before its formation could be perfected. But the Emperor held back from the fight, and on the 4th of June agreed to an

armistice, which gave the allies time to complete their armaments and to bring Austria over to their side. Did this mean that Napoleon's energy was breaking down? Or had he made a mistake in his calculations—failed to see his opportunity? One thing is certain; he held his troops back at the moment when their advance must have secured for him a complete victory. So it had been at Bautzen; so it was now in the days after the battle. He had reason to spare his army, for it was the last card in his hand, and he had hopes of dividing his opponents, which subsequent events did not justify.

But once the armistice ended (August 16th) the struggle began again, and events followed quickly their destined course. The Emperor now held a central position, and could act on those inner lines that had so often been his way to victory. But he had not chosen the position; it had been forced upon him. His opponents had the initiative, and he had to direct his movements by theirs, for they were as active as himself, avoiding the blows he aimed now at one, now at another of them, or forcing him or his marshals to give battle. If only he could have been in all places at once!—but while he was driving Blucher's army before him in Silesia, the Austrians, advancing from the mountains of Bohemia, threatened his central position at Dresden, and compelled him to let the old soldier be and to come back. Macdonald, left in Blucher's front, was so badly beaten by him on the Katzbach (August 26th) that he gave up all idea of further operations against him. The Emperor himself drove the enemy from before Dresden, but was too weak to follow up his success, for northwards Oudinot had been defeated at Gross Beeren (August 23rd),

and now his broken troops, as well as those of Macdonald, came pouring back across the Saxon frontiers. And then, while Napoleon now turned on Blucher, now on Schwarzenberg, drawn hither and thither amongst the hostile forces that were pressing upon him, Vandamme lost the battle of Kulm just beyond the Bohemian frontier (August 30th), and was taken prisoner; Ney was beaten at Dennewitz (September 6th); and at Wartenburg (October 3rd) York broke through the barrier that had to be maintained along the Elbe between Napoleon and his enemies, if his position at Dresden was to be made good. Now he was driven from his lair. He tried to come to close quarters with his assailants, but again they eluded his grasp, and meanwhile Schwarzenberg was once more advancing from the Bohemian mountains. Thus came the crisis; Napoleon had to choose between retreat—a retreat of which the Rhine could hardly be the end—and accepting battle wherever the enemy chose to offer it.

He decided on the latter alternative, for it was not his custom to retire without a fight, and to do so, moreover, would mean the defection of his German allies. For the sake of the Confederation of the Rhine, and of his suzerainty over the soil of Germany, he risked another and a last battle on the plains of Leipzig. The fighting of the very first day went against the Emperor, thanks largely to the impetuous valour of the Prussians, the regulars and the new levies vieing with each other. Retreat now became inevitable. Napoleon even thought of beginning it early on the 18th of October, when the allies attacked him first from the south, and then in the afternoon from the north-east, and out-

flanked and drove his corps back upon Leipzig. And then, on the third day of this conflict of nations, a battle such as Europe had not seen since the times of Attila, there came the storming of the city, and the retreat was turned into a disorderly rout. It was only the feeble pursuit of the victors that allowed the beaten army to halt for two days at Erfurt. Then the stream of fugitives poured towards the Rhine, their ranks more terribly thinned by typhus and dysentery than by the swords and bullets of the enemy. So far the War of Liberation had been a civil war, like all the wars that had ever been waged on the soil of Germany; but Leipzig laid the foundation of German unity. And, as must inevitably have been the case, it began with the rebellion of the conqueror's vassals. In the midst of the battle the Saxons, with their bands playing, had gone over to the side of their brothers of Germany, and as the beaten army retired along the road to Mayence, the revolt grew as the avalanche grows in its descent. Yet once more Napoleon had the opportunity of fighting, and fighting victoriously, on German ground. It was when General Wrede, with his Bavarians, tried to win his spurs, and make his King a more welcome new-comer in the camp of the allies, by barring the French retreat. But Napoleon broke through his army at Hanau (October 30th), and cleared the way into his own dominions.

For a moment it seemed as if he might find safety on the French side of the Rhine. The allied armies halted on the right bank of the river, and sent from Frankfurt envoys to offer the Emperor peace on terms that would give France its "natural" boundaries, that is, as was expressly stated in the note presented

by the negotiators, the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees. The Rhine was the frontier that had been won at the time of the Congress of Rastatt, and fixed at Lunéville. It was the frontier when the Emperor took the oath, by which he promised to maintain the integrity of France. One cannot say that he actually declined these proposals, but why did he put terms of his own in opposition to them, and give the negotiations a turn that his diplomatic opponents at once grasped at and used most cleverly to discredit him with his own people, and widen the rift between him and them? Was it nothing but his pride that held him back? Great as this was, and largely as we must recognise its influence on him even at this crisis, it would, nevertheless, be unfair to the Emperor to say that it was this alone that made it impossible for him to lay the sword aside. In the first place, the offer made to him was not at all precise or definite. It was a note, accompanied by verbal declarations on Metternich's part, giving a prospect of negotiations on this basis. Everything else was to be left to a Peace Congress, to which England was to be invited. Lord Aberdeen, the English Ambassador to Austria, was aware of this offer of negotiations, and had spoken in general terms of the willingness of his Government to treat; but he held no powers whatever to act as a plenipotentiary, and a fortnight later he did not fail to expressly inform the Austrian Minister that England protested against the paragraphs of the note which referred to her interests, and must, on the whole, consider it as a purely private document. In other words, England reserved to herself full freedom of future action. Hardenberg, the Prussian envoy, had not been asked to take part in this deliberation, and

in his diary he speaks of the proposed conditions as "a foolish business." But the note also reserved the right of the allies to continue their operations, and immediately after its despatch they decided upon a plan of attack on France, which included, as its first steps, the occupation of Holland and Switzerland. Further, the note contained nothing as to the compensations which the Powers would claim for themselves. Lord Aberdeen had spoken only in general terms of the willingness of England to freely hand back her conquests; but she would grant nothing that might prejudice her maritime rights. Above all, the name of Italy was not mentioned. But it was evident that Austria, whose troops were already pushing forward into Venetia, would look for her reward in that direction. Could Napoleon now abandon the country which among all his vassals was alone giving him its support, and was determined, energetically, to continue the war? And could he in any way count upon the English accepting his view of what were the natural boundaries of France, and agreeing to the Netherlands being included within them? Must he not rather have anticipated that they would announce to the Congress as their requirements the restriction of France to its old boundaries, and the liberation of Belgium? That, as a matter of fact, they had no other idea we know from a note of their most powerful minister, Castlereagh, dated the 13th of November, and addressed to Lord Aberdeen, which sets forth the demand for the strict limitation of France to its former boundaries, and regards the overthrow of Napoleon, and the French evacuation of Antwerp, as the essentials of British policy.

In a word, these offers could only mean for Napo-

leon a truce, at the end of which lay a new humiliation for him. Had he himself ever dealt otherwise with a defeated enemy? He who has the power in his hands makes the utmost use of it—no one had reduced this principle to practice more remorselessly than himself. It was thus he had carried through the peace negotiations at Lunéville, Pressburg, and Schönbrunn. Now it was his opponents who hoped to reduce him to this position of helpless submission to ever increasing demands. If he was to preserve his crown, as he had sworn to the nation, there was nothing left for him but to continue the struggle.

For this he needed, above all, to be safe from danger from the rear. During the last twelve months the war in Spain had taken a very bad turn. Wellington had driven the French before him, and was already in the south of France. Napoleon could only hope to stop the advance of the English on this side by giving peace to Spain. On the 8th of December he signed a convention with Ferdinand at Valençay, which gave him back his crown, if the Cortes would accept the arrangement. At the same time he offered Pius VII, who was now detained at Fontainebleau, freedom to return to Rome. But the Pope replied that he could only negotiate at Rome itself, and in January the Cortes declared that it could enter into no compact with the usurper.

The Emperor, therefore, if he meant to uphold at once the power of France and his own crown, could now count only upon such resources as France itself could supply. It was with this idea he appealed to the National Assembly and to his people themselves. "All Europe," he declared to the Senate on the 14th of November, "a year ago was with us—all

Europe is now against us. . . . We have, therefore, everything to fear if we have not the energy and force of the nation on our side." The Senate voted an address that really said nothing. But in the Corps Législatif there were open demonstrations, demands for the rights of freemen. The result was, that on the 31st of December, he prorogued the session. The allies had already passed the frontier, and he appealed to the nation itself. "I call Frenchmen to the help of France," he said; "peace and the freedom of our territory must be our war-cry!" But the might of France did not answer his call. The *levée en masse* proved a failure. As early as the middle of November there were only thirty millions of francs remaining in the treasury, "the last pears left by the drought," as Napoleon wrote to his treasurer Mollien, hiding his annoyance with the jest.

He could rely only upon his own genuis, and the military and administrative organisation on which he had based his power. And never had he given such brilliant proof of his own worth, as a leader, than in this campaign of 1814. His opponents had an enormous superiority in numbers. From Basel, and thence through Switzerland and the Jura, the Austrians and South Germans were pressing on in order to cripple the forces that might be brought up from the south of France, and to cut the communications with Italy. The Prussians and their allies, under Blucher, were advancing across the middle course of the Rhine. Bulow's army was to invade northern France from Holland, and even a smaller force than his would have been sufficient to dispose of all resistance in the Netherlands. The iron ring closed

tighter and tighter on the Emperor, and on his last defensive positions. Once more he was forced to take up the central position in the midst of enemies, the situation which he had turned to advantage to wrest from them his first great victories in the days of Monte Notte and Arcola, and he used this position better than he had done in the preceding year. As in the most brilliant days of his youth he united in his operations strength and swiftness, and that general grasp of the situation which had so often enabled him, even when his total force was less than that of the enemy, nevertheless to surprise and defeat them with superior numbers at the decisive point. Probably now that they saw the enemy in their country, which thanks to their Emperor had seen no enemy on its soil for twenty years, his people would have pardoned him if he had agreed to a peace that would leave to France its old boundaries. However this may be, the masses of the people remained true to him, and the army too, the common soldiers, the non-commissioned officers, and the officers of lower rank clung to him with ever growing enthusiasm. The strain of the invasion, the severe military measures adopted by the enemy and inspired by hate, incensed the peasants, and many a foreigner fell under their bullets. After the defeat of La Rothière (February 1st), Napoleon himself had a moment of depression, in which he was ready for sacrifices that at an earlier time his pride would have made intolerable. His most faithful servant, Maret, Duke of Bassano, who had lately resigned the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Caulaincourt, and taken over the Secretaryship of State, though so far a partisan of resistance, now himself implored Napoleon to submit.

In his memoirs he has described the scene that passed between him and the Emperor at Troyes in the beginning of February, and we may give his account of it as reliable. Napoleon had been turning over the pages of Montesquieu's famous work, and appeared to be paying no attention to Maret; then pointing to a passage, he said, "Read that, and read it aloud." And Maret read: "I know of no more magnanimous act than the resolution taken by a monarch of our own times to bury himself under the ruins of his throne, rather than accept proposals that a king should not listen to; for he was too proud to descend to a lower depth than that to which his misfortunes had brought him." "But I know something still more magnanimous," exclaimed Maret, "if you would but sacrifice your fame, and with it fill up the abyss in which otherwise France and you yourself will be engulfed." To which the Emperor replied, "Very well, let you gentlemen make peace. Caulaincourt will settle it, and I will bear the blame. But don't ask me to dictate the terms of my own degradation." The Emperor then sent to Caulaincourt, who represented him at the Congress of Chatillon *carte blanche*, but after that, in response to a protest from the latter, agreed to name definite conditions: Belgium and, if need be, the left bank of the Rhine would be given up, and Italy and even the colonies might be sacrificed.

But during these days the war took a surprising turn. Blucher, the ablest of his opponents, with his army, encountered the Emperor. Within ten days Napoleon had defeated him or his subordinate generals four times, sometimes routing them, and then at Montereau he handled in the same way a

corps of the main Austrian army, that of Prince Württemberg. Maret says that the better prospect the first of these victories gave him, led the Emperor to cancel the letter containing the conditions of peace on the 8th of February, only a day after he had written it. Now that victory was again on his side, the proud man had regained confidence in himself. Peace with only the old frontiers, he wrote to Joseph on the 18th of February, would be no peace, but only a capitulation, and would compel him to have recourse to arms again in two years. But he now hoped, he said, for a peace on the basis of what had been offered from Frankfurt as a minimum, and to this he could consent with honour. But the allies had no longer any idea of coming back to the Frankfurt proposals, not even those amongst them who, like the Emperor Francis, and for a while even the Czar Alexander, were not adverse to granting moderate terms. They demanded as preliminary conditions of peace the acceptance of the old frontiers of France, and as a guarantee the surrender of three French fortresses, which were to include Belfort and Besançon. "I feel so angered," wrote Napoleon, in reply to his plenipotentiary, "that I consider myself dishonoured, even by the mere proposal." But already the fortune of war was turning to the side of his enemies. Blucher's flank march northwards, and his junction with the allied army of the North brought on the decisive crisis. Napoleon, who had at once marched against him, came too late to engage him singly. Nevertheless, he ventured to attack at Laon the allies, now doubly strong. He was defeated, and then came the end. In vain the Emperor tried the boldest of all his manœuvres, making a dash at the

communications in the rear of the allied advance. The Prussians, and then the Austrians also, trusting in their superior forces, pushed on towards Paris without troubling themselves about the danger in their rear. At the very outset Napoleon found his march barred at Arcis-sur-Aube (March 21st), and it was only after a heroic struggle against more than threefold numbers that he forced his way through the enemy.

Nevertheless, he adhered to his plan, and pushed on through Vitry as far as St. Dizier. Once more fortune gave him a ray of the sunshine of her favour, when on the 27th he routed one of the enemy's corps at this place. But on the same day he found out for certain that the main armies of the invaders had disregarded his movements, and were in full march for his capital. For a moment he still hesitated. The country swarmed with armed peasantry; these united with the garrisons might perhaps have enabled him to continue the struggle in the eastern provinces. But at last he decided to turn back towards Paris. His troops began their return march on the morning of the 28th, and that same evening he received a letter from which he saw that he had not a moment to lose if he meant to save the capital. As a rule, Napoleon's own campaigns had been directed against the enemy's capital. It was clear that his opponents had learned something from him. But their capitals had never proved to be the final support of their power. At Vienna, at Berlin and, finally, at Moscow, Napoleon had had proof of this from his own experience. So long as these old-fashioned rulers commanded an army and held one province, they had found a refuge there. But his

capital was of greater importance to the usurper. It was there that plots and attempts against his throne and his life had been ventured upon; there lived all his rivals, his open or secret opponents; it was from there that Joseph, who as General-Lieutenant of France was at the Empress's side, daily sent more and more pressing letters to his brother, the Emperor, begging him to end the war and make peace. Treason was lurking there. Fast as the troops marched they went all too slowly for the Emperor. He heard that the enemy had reached Meaux, and defeated his marshals, Marmont and Mortier. From Troyes he rode forward, escorted only by his bodyguard, and at last hurried on in a carriage without any escort, hoping to get before the advance of the enemy. He was only a few leagues from the city when a courier met him with the news that Paris had fallen. On the 29th of March Maria Louisa had fled to Blois with her little son; on the 30th the Prussians stormed Montmartre; on the 31st Alexander and Frederick William made their entry into their enemy's capital. The Emperor had turned back to Fontainebleau, when Caulaincourt, whom he had sent to his old ally of Tilsit with full powers to conclude peace on the terms proposed at Chatillon, brought him back as his answer that the Czar demanded his abdication. He was not yet entirely without troops to support him, and a war in the provinces still offered some chance of success. He himself did not yet think of surrender, and the soldiers and many of the generals would have followed their Emperor to the bitter end. But others, and these the nearest to him and the highest, men like Marmont and Ney, Lefèbvre too, and Macdonald and Oudinot, had given up the game

as lost. On the 4th of April the four last mentioned approached him, and laid before him a document inspired by their friends in Paris. According to its terms the Emperor was to declare that he was ready to resign his throne in favour of his son, and to leave France, if the Powers so desired, and the good of the country demanded it. And the Emperor, who now saw no other resource open to him, signed it. But when the marshals went back to Paris and pointed out to the Czar that the army could not favourably regard the restoration of the monarchy, they were informed by Alexander himself that some of their comrades had already abandoned them, and that Marmont, the friend of Napoleon's youth, had become a traitor to him. Where was the Emperor to turn now that he was told this by Ney and Macdonald, who, with Caulaincourt, once more came back to see him? Perhaps to the Loire? Or to Italy? He had already thought of this, but the marshals declared that the army would not follow him. And so at last he decided on resigning the power he had created for himself, and signed the treaty which left him the title of Emperor and gave him besides sovereignty over the island of Elba.

Was it a nervous shock, produced, as one can easily imagine, by the excitement of these last days, that prostrated him during the following night? Or was it a first attack of the malady that later undermined his iron frame? Or, as has often been asserted, had he for a moment forgotten himself and taken poison? This is the account of the matter given by his trusted secretary, Baron Fain, and Maret, too, tells much the same story. But it is contradicted by the words the Emperor had spoken the day before to another, a

messenger from his wife. A death, he said, sought only by some act of despair, would be mere cowardice; suicide would befit neither his principles nor the place he had taken in the world. According to the same authority, he seemed as he spoke to be remarkably free from care, and full of his characteristic confidence in destiny "which rules all, and from which no one can withdraw himself." We may say, then, that the thought of suicide had come to him in those terrible hours, but without his seriously thinking of acting upon it. He was sustained by his pride, the feeling that he had won a place in history; and even this catastrophe could not break down his confidence in himself. Soon after, he said to one of his companions on the voyage to Elba, that "men blamed him" for surviving his fall. "This is an injustice," he continued, "I see nothing great in a man ending his life like a gambler who has lost his money at play. There is much greater courage in surviving undeserved misfortune."

And now came days of desolation for the Emperor. His generals, his counsellors, his very servants abandoned him. Even Roustan left him; and Corvisart too, his doctor, with whom he had so often joked during his morning visit, soon sought his fortune on the other side. On the 20th of April Napoleon bade farewell to the Old Guard in the courtyard of the château of Fontainebleau. To them, too, he said that he might have ended his existence, but he wished to live yet awhile in order to write and let men of future days know of the deeds of his warriors. He kissed the general, kissed the colours, bade a last farewell to his brave men, and started on his journey.

Accompanied by commissioners of the foreign

Powers he travelled to the place assigned to him through the districts which he had first seen when he was brought as a boy to Brienne, and which he had so often traversed as a young officer, as First Consul and as Emperor. The journey was over roads that he himself had constructed, and along which he had led the sons of France to victory. Again, as in the days of the Revolution, he found the south in a state of excitement. Now the agitators were the Royalists and the Clericals, to win over whom he had made every effort, who felt they were the conquerors, and were ready to take vengeance on the Revolutionists. They were quite capable of making him feel their anger, and in order not to be recognised he had to put on an Austrian uniform, and to wear the white cockade. This was, perhaps, the deepest of all the humiliations that fell to his lot. At Fréjus, the city where he had first trod the soil of France on his return from the East, an English corvette was waiting to convey him to Elba. On the 18th of April he went on board, and on the 4th of May, after having once more touched on the Corsican coast, he landed at Porto Ferrajo, the harbour of his new dominion.

CHAPTER IX

FROM ELBA TO ST. HELENA

"I WAS born and bred for work; I know no bounds to work, I am working unceasingly": so said Napoleon of himself on one occasion when at the height of his power. And now he was condemned to finish his life upon an island, the circuit of which he could make in two days on horseback. He had no sooner arrived than he was in the saddle, intent on getting to know his new territory. Almost his first concern was to strengthen two fortifications which he found there, to station in them two batteries, and to establish an armed force of over one thousand men, with the four hundred Grenadiers of the Guard, conceded him at Fontainebleau, as its nucleus. His fleet consisted of two or three vessels, which he provided with two pieces of cannon each: the man who had turned the Mediterranean into a French lake had to be satisfied with that! His administrative faculties found scope at first: the quarries and saline springs of the island called for more efficient working, new roads were needed, and many other such matters helped to call forth all his energies. These enterprises required money, however, and he found himself obliged to keep down his expenses, for the two millions which were to be paid him by his successor on the throne of France were

not forthcoming: the first infraction, it may be noted, of the treaty which the Powers had forced upon him. For his own personal wants he was adequately provided; in his will he recorded that he had saved 200,000,000 francs from his civil list. In addition, he had at his disposal the millions of Lætitia, who had come to the island to be with her son in misfortune, as she had been with him in the days of his greatness. His sister, Pauline, had come thither as well, and for a time also the beautiful Pole, the Countess Walewska, whom he had first met among the Polish nobles in Warsaw during the long winter months of the Prusso-German campaign. Her little boy, the child of the conqueror, was with her.

Marie-Louise held aloof, seeking to forget in the arms of Count Neipperg, and as Duchess of Parma, the brilliancy of her former station, together with the man who had given it to her. Take it for all in all, Napoleon's position at Elba may be said to have been that of a very well-to-do private individual, but it was an existence incompatible with his matchless energy and limitless ambition. The work which he found to his hand was soon exhausted. What was he to do; what field could he find for his restless activity? Did he think of setting to work at that record of his military achievements which he had promised the old veterans at Fontainebleau? Or did he ponder over the possibility of finding yet another chance of exerting his influence over the world's destinies? Did he already plan out his escape from his narrow bounds? Was he preparing for such an attempt? Was he resolved to take the first chance that came for outwitting his opponents? Or was it rather Destiny—a force stronger even than his own

will—that was to lead him once more upon the stage?

This much is certain, that Napoleon was not completely master of his own fate. In France the peace he had sought in vain was no more attainable under the legitimist ruler; the clash of parties was stronger than ever, and the Government of Louis XVIII stirred up the strife to a degree far from agreeable to the easy-going king, who had been so ready to content himself with the bread of banishment. The clergy and nobility who had procured the return of the King, were the classes that had suffered most and that had most to avenge, and that now, whilst exerting this new power to the detriment of their enemies, were bent, above all, on carrying out their own policy and furthering their own interests. The inevitable issue was a still more pronounced cleavage in the ranks of the nation, and a state of unrest which became daily more and more intensified, with the result that, not the masses alone, but also large sections of the upper classes, began to think regretfully of the exiled Emperor. The state of things was not more reassuring in Italy, where Murat, who had managed to save Naples for himself out of his brother-in-law's downfall, was now putting forth all his efforts to extricate himself from the precarious condition in which he had been placed by the Restoration, and was in treaty with all the most restless elements in the peninsula. The idea of the unity of Italy which Napoleon had inspired, gathered new strength in proportion to the unlikelihood of its realisation and the growing power of Austrian rule. At Vienna at the Congress of the Powers, assembled to bring into shape the new order of things in Europe, violent conflicts had become the

order of the day, and it looked as though the nations that had combined against Napoleon were now about to take up arms against each other.

Those to whose interest it was to maintain the new state of affairs in France and Italy could not but stand in fear of the prisoner of Elba—a prison so near both coasts. He was a source of dread, above all to traitors, and conspicuous among these was Talleyrand, who had almost made himself master of the situation at Vienna. He it was who first had the idea of removing Napoleon from the island. He had him surrounded by spies and, it is said, endeavoured to win over a captain of one of Napoleon's ships—an attempt discovered, according to the story, and frustrated. Certain it is, that Talleyrand, so early as October, 1814, submitted to the Congress the harsh proposal that Napoleon should be carried off to some island in the Atlantic Ocean, five hundred leagues from Europe—he thought of the Azores. He was supported in this by Pozzo di Borgo, Napoleon's rival in Corsica in former days, now a trusted adviser of the Czar. Castlereagh also was anxious to dispose thus of Napoleon and of Murat with him, as Talleyrand wrote in December to his royal master.

Was Napoleon to await quietly the fate which his enemies were planning for him? Or was he, as always, to advance to meet his fate, and strive once more to fashion it in accordance with his own will? There was no lack of tempters from Italy, both from the Austrian and Papal States and from Naples, where Murat was now once again playing into the hands of the Emperor; but to these Napoleon paid no heed: he could throw in his lot only with France, where,

moreover, he had friends in plenty, and whither he was being called not only by the mass of his adherents, but also by the force of old associations. Thus it was that he arrived at a decision worthy of him, and made up his mind to tear asunder the net woven for him by his foes before they could enmesh him in it.

His preparations were carried out in deepest secrecy, and on the 26th of February he found himself under sail with his small fleet. Madame Lætitia and his sisters remained behind. His mother approved of the enterprise. They had not got far when they came in sight of a French man-of-war, which had been told off to guard the island, but which now arrived too late. On the 1st of March the Emperor arrived at Antibes, the spot from which he had set forth to his first victories. Then came that unparalleled march to Paris, and the scene at Grenoble, where he advanced alone, his grey overcoat open to the wind, to greet the first battalion that he encountered, by calling out to them, "Which of you will fire upon his Emperor?" and receiving for answer a deafening shout of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" their officers, their colonel at their head, making a guard of honour for him as they led him in triumph into the city. The Royalists, who menaced him a year ago, have vanished; the Jacobins urge him on to vengeance; but as in the days when he was on his way back from Egypt, he has but one aim in view—the capital and a sovereignty above all parties. The situation is the same now as then; the soldiers to a man animated with the sole feeling of enthusiasm for their Emperor, and the officers with them, save only for the generals, who hesitate whether to remain true to their new oath or to break it like the old. Marmont

and his kind follow the King into exile; but Ney, setting out to Lyons to meet his old master, allows himself to be carried away by the stream. Everything falls out as foretold in the proclamation given forth at Grenoble by the Emperor: his eagles fly in triumph from steeple to steeple on to the towers of Notre-Dame. On the evening of the 20th of March he makes his entry into Paris, and betakes himself to his old quarters in the Tuileries.

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With what projects and aspirations did Napoleon deceive himself when for the second time he took his seat upon the throne of France? Are we to believe that when he quitted Elba he had it in his mind to hurl the torch of war again into the midst of the European nations, not yet arrived finally at peace? That his lust of conquest was once more at work? That he had no other thought than to resume the road from which the combined armies of Europe had forced him to turn aside? Whatever may be urged against him in regard to war at earlier periods of his career, his intentions at this moment, at least, should not be called in question. His most urgent need was the passivity of Europe in the face of his return. And it really looked as if he might count upon it. That condition of peace, at which he had aimed ever in vain, and which had ever eluded him like a phantom, as he grasped it, now existed, for England had granted it to the Bourbons. It was no longer his task to make himself master of the power created by the Revolution, and to obtain recognition for it, but to keep *under his own rule* the France of the Peace of Paris, as Europe had agreed to define it. It was, therefore, not only possible, but necessary for him

to call upon the nation itself to take a share in the government. It was only thus that he could offer the Powers a certain guarantee for peace. For under his former rule, just as when the Jacobins were in power, the tendency towards conquest had gone hand-in-hand with the strengthening of his own position in the country, and the repression of every free aspiration of its people. The longing of France for rest, which in recent years had manifested itself with such overwhelming force as even to do away with national pride, and the freedom of the people to express their views to their ruler, offered Europe a stronger guarantee for the maintenance of peace. The conquerors themselves had already counted upon this, when they surrounded the throne of Louis XVIII with Liberal institutions, which they had hardly a thought of giving to their own subjects. Therefore, by limiting his own power with constitutional forms, Napoleon had at any rate a better prospect than absolute rule would have given him, of obtaining that recognition by Europe which he had not been able to secure either by making peace with the clerical interest, or by his marriage with a daughter of one of the legitimately reigning families. He was himself deeply impressed with the necessity of taking this course. It was precisely foreign opinion that he took into account when he planned the Constitution, of which Benjamin Constant elaborated the details for him. Above all he thought of Austria, which of all the Powers had dealt most gently with him in the days of Elba. On this account he must, therefore, naturally loosen his connection with Italy, for in that direction lay the special interests of the Hapsburgs. He must also give more

scope to the influence of the Court of Vienna in Germany, and at once try to widen the division between the two leading German Powers. He might thus hope to be able to drive a wedge into the Coalition, which pressed upon him. I have no doubt that he counted upon this when he communicated to the Emperor Francis his hope of a friendly arrangement, and expressed his wish to see his wife and son again at his side.

The new Constitution, which on the 1st of May was proclaimed to the nation as a complement of the imperial system, was an attempt to unite Cæsarism with Liberal forms of government, such as were consonant with the tendencies of the Revolution at its beginning—the Plébiscite and the Electoral Colleges remained, but instead of the Corps Législatif, a Chamber of Representatives, instead of the Senate, an hereditary Chamber of Peers, with public debates, a budget, ministerial responsibility, and other Constitutional rights were called into existence. But if in the days of his absolute power the Emperor had stood above parties, holding them all in equal subjection, this was no longer possible for him as a Constitutional ruler. Those who had come back to the country with King Louis and emigrated again with him, and besides these, the leading traitors, the Augereaus, Marmonts, Talleyrands, were henceforth outside the pale of the law. Thus the men who had governed France during the interregnum, who had made peace with the Foreign Powers, and who were especially influential at Vienna, were now excluded, and the Emperor found himself to a greater extent than he can have liked, driven into the arms of the men of the Revolution. But if these had helped him

once more to display his eagle, they naturally wished to keep their hands with his on the flagstaff, and so from the first moment dissension and mistrust mingled in the work of pacification. To this was added apprehension as to the course the Powers would take, and the desire for repose felt by the nation, which would not at any price embark in new adventures. There was striking evidence of this on the occasion of the Plébiscite to which the new Constitution, like its predecessors, was submitted. Hardly one half the number of votes that had been given in earlier appeals to the people were registered for the new regime.

For it had already become clear that Europe would not endure the re-establishment of the Empire even on its new basis, and that Napoleon could only maintain his new power, like the old, by conflict. The news of his escape from Elba had drawn the Powers together again. On various grounds they were all agreed that with Napoleon no peace was possible. Even the Emperor Francis at once gave this as his opinion. On the 13th of March there followed the act of proscription by the Powers. Nine hundred thousand combatants were to be put into the field to capture once more the lion that had broken out of its cage.

If Napoleon still meant to bring about a division amongst his enemies it could now be accomplished only by the sword. He must grapple with those of his antagonists who were the fiercest in their hatred of his power, those who had forced on the hostile decision against him at the Congress of Vienna, those who were the first to act on the plan there adopted, and who already had their troops mustered in Belgium, whence they hoped to lead them by the shortest route to Paris. These were England and Prussia. And

he had to make haste. The only hope of safety lay in taking the offensive. It was the course to which his daring spirit had always impelled the great leader.

However, even his preparations for the struggle were impeded by the nation's longing for peace. Of his old soldiers only sixty thousand answered to the call to arms. At the outset the Emperor did not venture to enforce the conscription of 1815, and when it came it was too late. The Royalists rose in the west, and twenty thousand men had to be sent against them. Then the protection of the eastern provinces and the garrisons of the fortresses absorbed a considerable part of the available military forces. The result was that the Emperor had not more than one hundred and twenty-eight thousand men under his command when, in June, he made his advance against Belgium. His plan was to fall first on one then on the other of the two most formidable of all his enemies, Blucher and Wellington. He calculated that if they were beaten, the Coalition would fall to pieces. Austria, he thought, would abandon the defeated side, and perhaps Russia too, for she need then take no account of Prussia in the Polish question. He followed the same line of thought that Dumouriez had adopted when he was at the head of affairs, and when in the spring of 1792 he delivered his blow against Belgium; only he was striking at the Austrians, Napoleon at the Prussians.

And, indeed, it seemed as if fate was once more to obey the will of the great soldier. If only the god of victory and fortune whom he had called to his aid on the 19th of Brumaire, and who had for years been his companion, would now be with him for a few

hours! Even these, the readiest of his opponents for the struggle, had not expected his impetuous onset so soon. On the 15th of June he fell on their outposts and drove them in. On the 16th of June, at midday, he attacked the Prussians at Ligny and put them to flight, for Wellington, himself attacked at Quatre Bras, could not come to their aid. On the 18th, again at midday, he began the battle with this the most stubborn of his opponents at Waterloo. The greatest strategist of the time was opposed to its greatest tactician. But here was an occasion when everything depended on tactics. Wellington's was the skill to take advantage of that long fold of the ground, the watchfulness to close every gap in his line, the imperturbable calm that met the surging charges of the French masses of cavalry and the onset of the Emperor's grenadiers. It was thus that Wellington could wait till the Prussians, corps after corps, marched into the battle, pressing more and more strongly on the enemy's right, till at last the French gave way and then broke into wild rout. "What would have become of the Coalition," wrote Gneisenau after the victory, "and of all the story of the Congress, if the battle had been lost?" And this was the fact; it was the blood of Ligny and Waterloo that once more cemented the alliance together, and gave victory to the forces of reaction. The Revolutionary Empire was at an end. It was not only the army of Napoleon that was shattered. His throne, of which it had once more been the only support, went to pieces.

He himself would not yet give up hope. If only full power, a dictatorship, would again be entrusted to him! This was what he asked of the Representa-

tive Assembly, when he had reached the Elysée early on the 21st of June, after a hurried flight to Paris. But the reply which both Chambers gave him left him no doubt that his star had set. The veterans of the Revolution, who were with him at this moment, Carnot and his brother Lucien, tried to persuade him to put himself at the head of his adherents and hurl himself upon his enemies, whether they came from within or from without. But what party leaders could do, he could not venture on. He could not abandon the position that he had taken up since he had thrown in his lot with the Revolution. It was only to the Conqueror that the nation had given itself. The Chambers could rebel against him now that he was conquered, and could do so without any fear of being disavowed by the army and the people. The members of the Lower Chamber had at once protested against any attempt the Emperor might make to interfere with their powers, and declared themselves in permanent session, as if they thought of re-establishing the National Convention. They would not have any further negotiations with him, and when Napoleon seemed to be raising new objections, they threatened him with the decree of outlawry, which had so completely missed its mark when it was used as a menace on the 19th of Brumaire. They were not Jacobins, as he called them in his helpless rage; they were bourgeois, with a few nobles and academicians who, after a revolutionary past, were adherents of the Liberal Party, men like Lafayette, Broglie, Constant, and their friends; the "men of ideas" who, after the days of Brumaire, had sided with him, and whom he afterwards thrust aside. Now he was helpless in opposition to these very men

whom he had despised, and he had to resign himself without a struggle to his fate. On the 22nd of June he again signed his abdication, once more, as at Fontainebleau, in favour of his son. He could not afford to wait longer, if only on account of the menacing advance of the Prussians, who were likely to show him even less mercy than his subjects had done. Once more from Malmaison, whither he had retired on the 25th of June, he offered his services as a leader. He would come as a simple general, only to save the capital by striking at the enemy while they were still divided. Fouché, who was at the head of the Provisional Government established by the Chambers, sent him word in reply that he had better not delay his departure for a moment, for otherwise they could not answer for his personal safety. And so the Emperor started on another journey to the coast, this time westward, and accompanied by French officers. He travelled more slowly than on the way to Fréjus, ever casting his glance backwards, and dallying with the thought of being perhaps able to turn back. On the 3rd of July he arrived at Rochefort. But it seemed as if his energy itself had gone with his power. English warships were cruising off the port, and there was danger that if the Emperor tried to escape he would fall into the hands of these enemies. From Paris he was urged to leave the soil of France. But he did not dare to go. What had been an easy matter for him when he was in Egypt and in Elba, when he was going forth to do deeds that led to power, seemed now to fill him with fear. For he did not like the idea of running the risk of being captured like a thief. So he chose a middle course, a compromise such as generally his resolute

nature recoiled from, but one that now seemed to him to be alone worthy of him, and which in fact bore the full impress of his character. There recurred to him the memory of one of Plutarch's heroes, whose fate had impresed his mind as a boy. He decided to give himself up to the enemies with whom he had struggled all his life long, and to ask them to receive the vanquished amongst them as a free man. He wrote to the Prince Regent that he had ended his political career, and was coming, like another Themistocles, to sit down beside the hearth of the British people, and place himself under the protection of their laws. On the 15th of July he surrendered to the captain of the British ship of the line, *Bellerophon*. For eight days longer the ship lay off the French coast. It was not till the 26th of July that it arrived at Plymouth. There at last he saw the shore of England lying close before his eyes, but he did not land upon it. On the 30th he was informed of the answer to his request which the English Ministry had decided upon, after consultation with the representatives of the Powers at Paris. In order to deprive "General Bonaparte" (such was the title now given to the outlawed man) of the opportunity of ever again disturbing the peace of Europe, the island of St. Helena had been selected as his place of abode for the future. Napoleon protested against this decision as an act of tyranny, a breach of the law of nations, pointing out that he had given himself up voluntarily and without compulsion, though he might have prolonged the war with the army on the Loire. Notwithstanding this, he had chosen to surrender in order to put an end to the sufferings of humanity. He urged upon his conquerors that by this unworthy

treatment of him they would bring a stain upon their own fame, and warned them that they would be condemned by posterity. But these were words that made no more impression on the English than his earlier appeal to their magnanimity. On the 7th of August the fallen Emperor had to embark, with the companions his stern conquerors allowed him to take with him, on board the warship, which was to convey him after a voyage of more than two months to the remote island.

. . . . . .

"*Sainte Hélène, petite île*," so ran a line in an extract which Bonaparte as a sub-lieutenant had copied out of some geographical work. It is, indeed, a small place. Only forty-seven square miles is the whole extent of this bit of English ground, to which fate had at last brought him. Yet small as it was, it was not all free to him. At first he had to spend some weeks in the house of an English trader, near the little town in which the few English colonists and their black servants were crowded together. There, not far from the coast, which with its glens overgrown with myrtle and laurel might remind him of his native Corsica, he found a friendly welcome, and spent a short time pleasantly. But at the end of the year he moved into the residence appointed for him. It was the long, low and damp house of a dairy-farm, known as Longwood, on the upper part of the island, over whose bleak summits the storm winds raged, while the sight of the waste of waters around made the sense of lonely isolation all the stronger. Yet the Emperor was less alone here than he would have wished. At no great distance the house was surrounded by a line of sentry-posts. Within this

cordon he might move about freely, but if he wished to pass outside of it he had to be accompanied by an English officer. For his conquerors still feared that he might yet escape. All their care was anxiously directed to making this impossible for him. Much has been written of the littleness Napoleon showed, the devious and even deceitful methods he used in carrying on a kind of guerilla warfare with his keepers over the remnants of freedom that were left to him; how he worried and almost wore out the good Sir Hudson Lowe, the governor of the island, who only did his duty, and gave in to Napoleon whenever he could see his way to do so. We do not mean to make excuses for our hero in this as in other things; but even those who blame might judge him more gently if they would remember how, as we have seen in the case of the founder of the new German Empire, the fall from the height of power influences the character of men who have found their only happiness in active rule.

As Bismarck, at Friedrichsruh, turned his mind to handing on to future times his recollections and his thoughts on his policy and on the work he had accomplished, so Napoleon at St. Helena—but with more restless energy and a wider view than the German statesman—wrote of what he had done, gave expression to his thoughts on men and politics, and made the whole history of the century the subject of his studies. He turned back to the schemes and plans with which he had been busy in his youth. But just as all he then wrote showed that he had a practical end in view, and the desire to be working at it, so even now he could not abandon entirely the hope and the longing for action. It was not that he

thought of making his escape. He always declined the proposals made to him in this direction. As he had voluntarily given himself up to the English, he hoped for freedom only from some general change of policy. He was incessantly thinking out combinations that might lead to this result; and almost all the political and historical writings that he dictated had some kind of connection with this object. It seemed to him impossible that the rule of the Bourbons would last; and in this, at least, he was a true prophet. He foresaw a future Europe in which Liberal ideas would again force their way to triumph, and at the same time be reconciled with the religious spirit. These thoughts he connected with his own policy, and gave a forecast of that tendency, which further developed in the "Napoleonic Ideas" of his nephew, led to the programme of the Second Empire. Even in captivity his self-confidence was unbroken. "I have," he once said, alluding to Cherbourg, "erected my pyramids in the sea." He never expressed regret for what he had done to the Duc d'Enghien. In his last testament he declared, "I would act in the same way under similar circumstances." He persisted in asserting that he had desired peace, and that it was Europe that had forced him into war. And even in exile nothing was plainer to him than that he had been the creature of circumstances, the slave of policy. He called upon posterity to bear witness to his deeds, and as for his adversaries, he said they would be biting at granite if they dared to belittle his fame. In his political "testament" he himself indicates the two historians who should set forth to the world the course of his policy and his exploits as a leader in war, and he bade his son, with

whose future all these thoughts were connected, always to read and re-read history, for it was the only true philosophy.

He was already ill when he arrived in the island. Before long the symptoms became more serious, and at last they plainly showed that he was suffering from the same malady that had killed his father. The pains and sufferings that it brought with it he endured as a part of the inevitable, to which he had always bowed. He now looked on death as calmly as when he stood before the muzzles of the guns at Grenoble, or took his place in a square of the Grenadiers of the Guard at Waterloo. In his will, which he dictated only a few weeks before the end, he remembered all his friends, the generals who had been faithful to him, the grenadiers of Elba, and the wounded of Waterloo, his companions at St. Helena, and his first chamberlain, Marchand, whose service to him had always been that of a friend. But above all he thought of France, whence he had twice been exiled, and to which, thinking of the future of his family and the memory of his deeds, he still clung closely, closer one might almost say than in the days of his greatness. On the 5th of May, 1821, he succumbed to his illness. As a last favour from destiny he had asked for a grave in French earth on the banks of the Seine. But this, too, his enemies refused him. His body was buried on the heights of the rocky island, not far from Longwood. Only after long years was his last wish fulfilled, and his mortal remains borne to the place where they now rest, in the midst of the trophies that he had won for France during an unparalleled career of glory.

. . . . . .

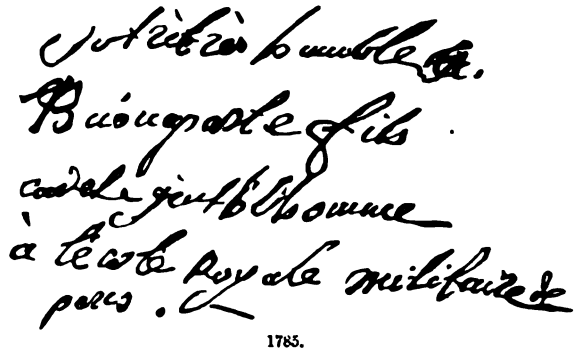
In the *Discours de Lyon*, as we have seen, Napoleon had described Alexander the Great as the victim of a self-devouring ambition. Later, he saw in him the hero whose good fortune had been the greatest that the world had ever witnessed. Once he said, half in jest, "There is no longer anything great to be done. If I were, like Alexander, to have myself proclaimed the son of Jupiter Ammon, every fish-wife would laugh in my face." Perhaps it was just on the point he here touched upon that he had least reason to fear comparison with the Macedonian king. For the gain to his power which his Church policy secured him, can hardly be said to have been less than the influence which Alexander tried to secure by associating himself with the priesthood of the land of the Pharaohs. And we can on the whole say that the power which Napoleon held in his hands, when it was at its greatest, was not inferior to that of any empire known to history. The end of both these heroes, and the fate of their empires, also afford a parallel, though Alexander's lot was more fortunate, for he followed the call of the gods to Hades in the fullness of his strength and at the height of his power, and had not to survive the inevitable breaking up of his dominions. Alexander stands above Napoleon, moreover, when we consider the results of their careers. With a few strong blows the Greek king broke open the gates of the East, which had remained closed against Greece in days of her freedom, but at the same time he laid the foundations for the meeting of East and West, and thence arose new forms of life for the world. The empire of Rome, the spread of Christendom, had their prelude in his victories. By comparison, the life-work of

Napoleon is but an episode in the world's history. The Revolutionary State, which he believed he had perfected as First Consul, was not created by him nor was it to be a permanent result to remain after him. He was no more able than the Jacobins to bridle the reactionary forces that had held France in fetters since the fall of the Huguenots. And in the end the Powers of old Europe triumphed over him after all his victories. It counted nothing for him that he had closed the abyss of anarchy, raised the French to the position of "the great nation" of Europe, and won for himself and his family recognition, alliance, and even relationship with the great ruling houses of the Continent. He remained an alien in France, and illegitimate among the legitimate monarchs.

Once, and in the days when they were still allies, the Czar had compared him to a torrent—"you had only to wait till the flood subsided." Napoleon had in truth burst upon Europe like a mountain stream, whose waters subside as quickly as they rise in their destructive force. But we should do injustice to our hero if we saw in him only the power of destruction. He did not merely pile up wreck and ruin around him; wherever he came he broke up the ground and prepared it for a rich harvest. The national ideals of Italy must recognise in him, rather than in Alfieri, their creator. All the energetic life of Spain dates from the days of Bayonne. The States that now form, beside Prussia, the pillars of the German Empire, rest on foundations that he laid. It was no discredit to him to have destroyed, north and south of the Alps, such historic wrecks as the republics of Genoa and Venice, and the prince-bishoprics of the old German Empire.

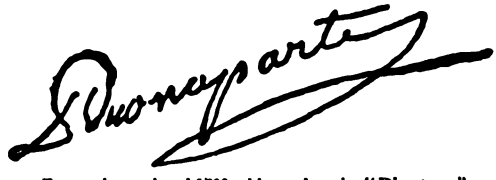
The new light of freedom in the Tyrol comes from ideals that sought in vain to penetrate into its valleys in the days of Hofer and Speckbacher. It was their failings that brought the army and the State, formed by the Great Frederick, to ruin at Jena. And how much of the new spirit that arose in Prussia, under the very oppression of the conqueror, seems to us now to be a reflection of the forces that the Revolution aroused and Napoleon organised in France! But above all, in France itself, even to this day, not only the basis of administration, the law, the army, whose foundations he laid, or strengthened in the spirit of the Revolution, but every department of intellectual and national life bears still the traces of his work.

And so there arises in the mind of the onlooker that deepest sense of tragedy which we only derive from the sight of real beings shaping out their life. And we may well apply to him the words in which as a young man of twenty-two he himself pointed to the twofold fate of Genius: "*Les hommes de génie sont des météores destinés à brûler pour éclairer leur siècle.*" "Men of genius are meteors, destined to burn in order to give light to their era."



1785.

1793.

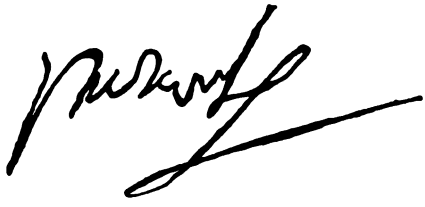


From a letter dated 1793 addressed to the "Directory."

From a document dated 18th Fructidor, year IV, written at the head-quarters of the French army in Italy.

1796.

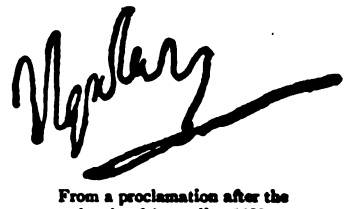
To the proclamation at Milan, 1796.



While First Consul, 1803.

As Emperor, 1804.

As Emperor, 1804.



From a proclamation after the battle of Austerlitz, 1805.

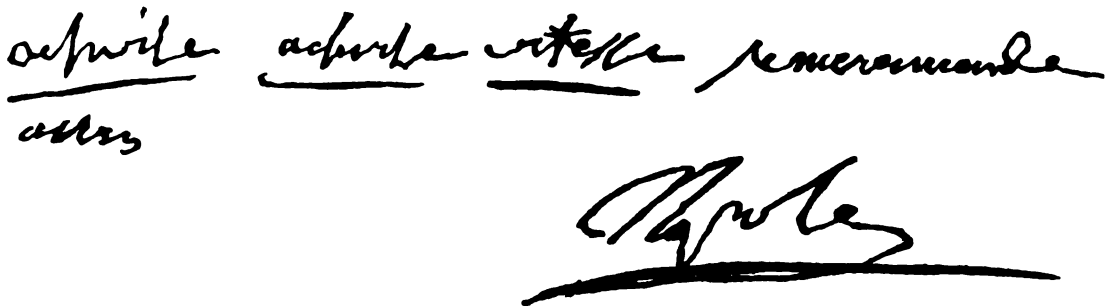
After the campaign of 1806.

At Tilsit, 1807.

INITIALS.

In Madrid, 1808.

At Schönbrunn, 1809.



"*Activité, activité, vitesse.* Je me recommande à vous." To Masséna in April, 1809.

Written during the burning of Moscow, September 21, 1812.

During the retreat from Russia, November 6, 1812.

Erfurt, October 28, 1813, after defeat at Leipzig.

At Fontainebleau, 1814.

St. Helena.

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